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TWO GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS

WITHIN a week the military outlook in the Old World has been transformed. The initiative has passed to the United Nations. Rommel's army is a broken army, which has lost the ability to attack and may not for long retain the capacity to resist. With astonishing ease the keys of French North Africa have been wrenched from the control of the enemy and of Vichy. In Russia it is probable that Hitler has abandoned his attempts to take Stalingrad by storm. These events consumed surprisingly little time in the doing and very much less in the telling. Mr. Churchill in his speech on Wednesday told us of the long months of patient and laborious preparation that lay behind these African successes. Every tank and every shell that played a part in sweeping Rommel out of Egypt had spent three months on the perilous journey round the Cape. Madagascar and Liberia had been occupied to ensure the safety of these cargoes. Thanks to the labours of British and American workers and the daring of British sailors, General Alexander had at his disposal overwhelmingly superior forces in the air, with the tanks and guns of a calibre, power and design that made him more than a match for a formidable enemy. If we have spoken first of the workers, seamen and organising talent that contributed to this victory, it is assuredly not that we underestimate the share in it of the brilliant airmen and the highly trained infantry whom General Montgomery led with equal dash and skill. But in considering both this exploit and that of General Eisenhower in French North Africa, what impresses us first of all is the scale of these vast co-operative enterprises, at which a million hands, women's as well as men's, may have laboured for every thousand combatants who marched or flew. The effort of transport alone makes an epic of courage and combination, for it included not only the passage round the Cape, but for much of this material also the crossing of the Atlantic where every voyage is a campaign, and for some of it a journey by air over the Sahara. In the last few weeks before our Navy landed the American army in safety at many points on the African coasts, the foresight of its complex staff work made a record equalled only by the skill and steadiness of the officers and men who navigated this great Armada through fog and tempest, and evaded submarines and aircraft alike with hardly a loss. If during the gloomy months that lie behind us any of us have underrated the competence or the organising capacity of our Services, industrial and marine as well as combatant, we have realised during these last days what generous amends we owe them.

Much has been won already and vastly more lies in prospect. It may be that the more valuable part of Rommel's army, the German part, will be capable of another stand, but it has lost in pursuit and battle the greater part of its armour and guns, and in the skies it had long been outmatched. Poor though the fighting quality may be of the Italian auxiliaries it abandoned in the desert, they are good engineers, indispensable in all the preparatory work of a modern campaign. Menaced as this German remnant soon may be from the West also, it may be a sober guess that any further defensive stand it can now make will be designed to gain time for the escape of some part of it to Sicily or Crete by air or sea, rather than for the forlorn hope of retaining Libya for any length of time. We do not forget that the distances are immense, nor that these perilous waters are still far from being under the command of our sea and air forces. The time factor escapes any prudent estimate, but it is reasonably certain that during this winter all Libya, with the rest of the North African coast, will fall to the United Nations.

General Eisenhower in a few days has come near recovering the advantage we should have retained, when France collapsed, if M. Reynaud had been a bolder or more fortunate man. But the fighting France which then failed to transfer itself to Africa is now reforming there. If we owe unstinted praise both to the American soldiers and the British sailors who carried out with such cool competence an operation that ranks among the biggest of its kind in history, we have been equally fortunate in the reaction to it of most of the French troops and population. Such resistance as there was came chiefly from the French Navy and its coast defence units. It seems probable that General Giraud may be able to secure not merely the acquiescence of the large and well-trained army on the spot, but the active participation of most of it in the further operations of the United Nations. For our part, we confess that its attitude surprises us no less than it pleases us, for its political outlook was thought to be reactionary, nor had it experienced directly either the humiliations or the privations that have fallen on European France. Much may be due to the romantic tradition of Franco-American friendship and something to Mr. Roosevelt's moving and human appeal. For once our operations had the advantage of surprise, for while our attack on Dakar and perhaps on Casablanca was expected, it evidently had not occurred to the Axis that our landings would range from Oran to Algiers. The critical point of these operations will be, however, Bizerta, the strongly fortified key to the Sicilian narrows. In Tunis, as a whole, in spite of its considerable population of probably disillusioned Italians, we anticipate a reception as friendly as elsewhere. But Bizerta is a naval port, and the Axis will make a special effort to retain it. The first great gain, however, from these immense and fortunate operations cannot lie far ahead—the recovery of the sea-road through the Mediterranean with all that this spells in relief, first for our overburdened merchant marine, then for our overworked Navy, next, for India and China, and finally for Russia, since it brings nearer by many thousands of miles the ports on the Persian Gulf through which her armies round the Caspian may be supplied.

It remains to speak of the significance of this African stroke for the Continental strategy of the United Nations. Since the next objective has been disclosed in the American Senate, we may write plainly about it. For over a year military opinion has been divided first between those who believed that Germany, up to the penultimate phase of collapse, could be defeated by bombing alone and those who advocated an early invasion of Europe. But these again were divided between those who would have chosen a descent across the Channel on France and those who favoured the long way round through North Africa to Italy. It would be both graceless and useless to recall the reasons that led us to adhere to the Channel school. The decision has gone the other way, and it has been executed on a scale and with a brilliance and speed surpassing our expectations. If the eventual attack on Sicily and Italy follows this model and repeats its competence and good fortune, a Second Front may be opened in Europe without any very long delay. Any resistance the Italians could make unaided would be negligible, for the troops Mussolini has lost in Abyssinia, Albania and Libya were, strange to relate, his best: of the rest, the younger levies are tied down in the Balkans. But it is to be foreseen that the Germans will now reinforce the air squadrons and garrisons they already have in Italy. They have already begun the occupation of what was unoccupied France. This may not at once affect the Russian Front, since some part of the German armies there, following the precedent of last year, would in any case be withdrawn during the severer months of the winter. But it does mean that when May comes round again, there could be no German offensive in Russia on the scale of this year and last. In other words, the effects which we and the Russians associated with the idea of a Second Front in Europe will be achieved. The enemy, that is to say, will be caught between two fires and compelled to divide his forces, while the liberation of the Continental peoples may have begun. The Alps, to be sure, with the recently constructed defences in depth of the Brenner Pass, are a formidable obstacle, but given the command of the Mediterranean other alternative roads to the enemy's central stronghold will be available. When once the process of wrenching the subjugated peoples from his grasp has begun, his satellites and victims will fall away from a New Order which must contain all Europe if it is to survive at all.

That this vision of the future has crossed Hitler's own mind was clear in his speech of Sunday. He saw the spectre in front of him and answered it with the defiant pledge that he will not capitulate as the Kaiser did. That speech if we know how to read it, should suggest to us the political strategy appropriate to the era of the military offensive that has now opened. Hitler himself has begun to say what Goebbels has been repeating for some time: he is trying to convince the German people that if it wishes to survive as a nation, it must fight on to the last ditch. That prospect lies far ahead: its "ditches" are still as distant from its homeland as the Volga and the Bay of Biscay. But it is not too early to counter that argument. The German workers and the German Left, on whom alone we can count, both for an eventual revolt against the Nazis and for the building after their overthrow of a new Germany, will be helped or discouraged in preparing the indispensable revolution by what we do in the liberated lands. If we bring back Liberty, Equality and Fraternity to African France, and carry them across the Tyrrhenian sea to Rome, the Other Germany will understand its cue.

Mr. Churchill's Speech

The Prime Minister was in a strong position when he faced the House to give an account of his stewardship and of the immediate military position. He naturally and rightly received a cordial welcome. He gave the figures of our losses which our defeat of Rommel has cost us up to date. Much as one may regret them, one must admit that 14,000 is a low figure for a victory of such magnitude under modern conditions of warfare. It was rather surprising to learn that of the enemies' losses, 60,000 up to date, more than half were German. Mr. Churchill's defence of his strategical plan which he had followed during the past year, and which has culminated in the defeat of Rommel and the occupation of Algeria and Morocco by an Allied army was vigorous and, under the circumstances, convincing. Not the least important part of his speech was his account of our relations with Russia. One has in the past often regretted the fact that he did not appear to give in his public speeches due credit to the achievements or sacrifices of Russia. His tribute on the present occasion was therefore welcome, because overdue. Particularly important was his statement on our obligations to the U.S.S.R. with regard to a Second Front—namely, that he had informed the Russian Government in writing that we were preparing for a Second Front in Europe for 1942, but could not promise it.

The Shipyards Under Fire

The Select Committee on National Expenditure opens its report on the shipyards on a congratulatory note; but it is difficult to discover in the rest of the report any good reason for the complacency of the earlier paragraphs. Even if the shipbuilding industry has been successful in carrying out its scheduled programme of new construction and in keeping abreast of necessary repairs, may not this be due rather to the modesty of the programme than to anything very remarkable in what has been achieved? We do not dispute that on the whole the men in the industry have been giving of their best; but it remains entirely inexplicable that no attempt was made to register skilled workmen who had drifted away from shipbuilding until February 1941 (whereas engineers were registered in the late summer of 1940), and that the Admiralty have taken so long about the job of getting closed shipyards reopened, that some of the cases are still under consideration, and many of the yards are still being quite inadequately used. If it is said that this is due to shortage of skilled labour, the failure to take earlier and stronger steps to bring men back to the industry needs all the more explaining. One big difficulty in the way of expanding the supply of skilled shipyard labour has been that shipbuilding wages are low in comparison with wages in engineering, steel, and other industries using comparable types of labour; and there have also been difficulties over the big variations in earnings between one yard and another. Labour relations are also bad in many cases; and the Select Committee notes both the weakness of the provisions for labour management and the continued absence of Production Committees, except in a very few firms. The Committee renews the animadversions made in an earlier report on the methods of fixing contract prices, which are so arranged as to give little incentive to economy, and suggests in more than one place that even the existing capacity is not in fact being fully used. It is somewhat discouraging about the prospects of speeding up output by further use of prefabrication methods, which are said to use more labour in total—though less skilled shipyard labour—than the traditional form of construction. Nor does it put high hopes on the substitution of welding for riveting processes, though it believes some extension of them to be possible. Finally, it points to the very low proportion of women in the yards, even to-day, and urges an expansion of female labour as the main method of expanding the supply of workers.

The Labour Situation in America

The labour situation in the United States becomes more and more tangled. The Congressional voting has been widely interpreted as showing a marked anti-labour tendency, partly, no doubt, because many of the younger workers are either in the armed forces or disfranchised by movement out of their home areas on war work. Anti-New-Deal Democrats, as well as Republicans, are already clamouring for abrogation of the forty-hour week, repeal of the Morgan Labour Relations Act, and other reactionary changes. At the same time the working class movement itself is more divided than ever since Mr. Lewis, not content with taking his United Mine Workers out of the C.I.O., has induced them to open their ranks to all and sundry, and thus to become a general union in rivalry with both the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. Rumour is busy with the notion that Mr. Lewis may now patch up his quarrel with the A.F. of L. and return to the conservative labour fold, thence to engage in an extended competition with the C.I.O. for the enrolment of workers in the mass-production industries. The A.F. of L., in the meantime, maintains its strong anti-Soviet attitude, and still rejects the British proposal for a tripartite committee representing the Trade Union movements of the three countries. Where Mr. Lewis now stands politically nobody quite knows, except that he remains a bitter opponent of Mr. Roosevelt. But there seems to be no doubt that he has veered back a long way towards his original conservative attitude, or that he intends to pursue his vendetta against Mr. Philip Murray and the C.I.O. How far the C.I.O. will be adversely affected by the growth of anti-labour feeling in the new Congress will depend on Mr. Roosevelt's success in handling the situation. The President's attempts to reconcile the rival labour factions now seem less likely than ever to achieve any success. Reactionary legislation in the new Congress might perhaps drive them together in self-defence; but we doubt whether much will come in practice of the threats that are being uttered just now. On the other hand, America is only at the beginning of that process of mobilising industrial man-power which is bound to involve, as it has done here, considerable restrictions on the freedom of the workmen; and there is no Mr. Bevin in office on the other side of the Atlantic to see that difficult job through.

Roadways and Seaways

It is among the most curious of wartime facts that even at this critical stage in the mobilisation of transport coastwise shipping remains outside Government control, except for a scheme regulating charges; and it is hardly less curious that road haulage is only now beginning to be brought under any effective scheme of national organisation. No doubt both forms of transport are difficult to regulate, because of their essential irregularity; but that is by no means the whole of the explanation. Even now, only long-distance road haulage is being brought under any sort of comprehensive control, by means of a regional system pivoted upon selected nucleus firms; and the regulation of haulage over shorter distances is merely spoken of as likely to follow in due course. Plainly these measures, coming so late in the day, have been dictated more by shortage of petrol and tyres than by considerations of the efficiency of transport; and even now they have an appearance of half-heartedness. The reduced road capacity will, of course, involve a further strain on the railways, which are already near the limit of what they can do, and on coastwise shipping as well. It is, in these circumstances, of the greatest importance to make the best possible use of all the shipping that can be made available, and to secure for it the greatest possible turn-round at the ports. On the face of the matter, this situation would seem to call for a much stricter control than exists at present. Lord Leathers, in his address last week to the Institute of Transport, stressed the vital part played by coastwise shipping and barge services in the war effort, but did not throw out any hint of more complete control. Yet surely the case for a complete co-ordination of transport agencies, in order to secure the fullest possible economy in fuel consumption and in direct man-power, is overwhelming.

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STALIN'S SPEECH

THE last ten days have been the best that we have lived through since the defeat of the *Luftwaffe* in the Battle of Britain. Moreover, to-day we have solid ground for hope, whereas then our feelings were mainly of relief; in 1941 we looked back grimly to escape from defeat and destruction, while in 1942 we can look forward soberly to victory. The grounds for hope are, we repeat, solid. In Russia Stalingrad still holds, a sign and symbol of Nazi frustration, and winter is descending upon a German army which for the second year has failed to achieve its objective. In Egypt another German army which a few months ago, under one of Hitler's most capable generals, had dealt us a crushing blow and seemed to be on the brink of complete victory, has been outmanoeuvred and fairly and squarely beaten; it is routed—disintegrating. Behind it in the west a new American army has landed on the coast of North Africa.

But encouragement is not confined to the military front; it is also to be found pre-eminently in the remarkable speech of Mr. Stalin at the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Soviet Revolution. The closest co-operation between Soviet Russia and the United States and ourselves, both in war and peace, is the only hope for the future, and during the last year there have been moments when differences appeared to be having the most unfortunate effects. They turned for the most part upon the question of a second front. A refreshing quality of Stalin's speeches is their bluntness. When he spoke to the Russians last week in Moscow he did not hide his thoughts either from them or from his allies. He told us bluntly what the effect of the absence of a second front in Europe has been during the last year, and he did not conceal his opinion, which he has expressed pretty plainly before, that his allies ought to have provided that second front in 1942. But like a sensible man, he prefers to let the past bury its dead and its quarrels, while he concerns himself with the present and the future. The remarkable passage in which he stressed his belief in the growing unity and strength of the Soviet-Anglo-American alliance and the determination of his allies to open the second front which will lead to a common victory was the most encouraging thing in his speech. It may also be not unfairly interpreted as a gentle hint to those critics of Great Britain in Russia and elsewhere whose disappointment over the absence of a second front in Europe has occasionally clouded their judgment.

There is another passage in Stalin's speech which deserves close attention, for it bears directly upon the controversy over Vansittartism which has been raging in our Correspondence columns. The deluge of letters which have rained down upon us during the last weeks with regard to this question shows at least that the subject is of intense interest to a large number of people. That interest is justified, for the controversy at first revealed, but is now beginning to conceal, a problem which is going to be of great difficulty and crucial importance in the last year (or years) of war and the first years of peace. That the disputants are beginning to produce more darkness than light is mainly due to their heat, for in controversies light is in inverse proportion to heat. The dispute which began over the guilt of the German people is ending in mutual recriminations of guilt and wickedness between the disputants, and some of our correspondents complain, with justification, that the verbal mêlée has become so confused that Vansittartite and anti-Vansittartite now seem to be saying the same thing in different words.

If the disputants will study certain words in Stalin's speech, they may help to recall their attention to realities and to the real problem. Stalin was deliberately contrasting Hitler's war aims with his own. Hitler, he said, has announced that "We shall destroy Russia, and it will never rise again." That, says Stalin, "is perfectly clear, but it is rather silly." And he adds that luckily Russian war aims do not burden him with the problem of destroying Germany, for it is no more possible to destroy Germany than Russia. All that he has to do is to destroy the Hitlerite state, which "is possible and necessary." Again Hitler announced, "We shall prosecute the war until no organised armed force remains in Russia." That too is quite clear, says Stalin, but "not convincing," and he again contrasts his own war aims. "Our aim," he says,

> "is not to destroy all armed force in Germany because any intelligent man will understand that this is as impossible in the case of Germany as in the case of Russia. It would be unreasonable on the part of the victor to do so. To destroy Hitler's army is possible and necessary."

It is clear from this what Stalin's war aims are—they are to destroy the Hitlerite state and the Hitlerite army, to wipe out the present leaders of the German nation. That is possible and necessary, but it would not be reasonable on the part of the victor even to destroy all armed force in Germany. This throws light upon the real problem underlying the Vansittart dispute, the problem of what is to be offered to the German and the other defeated peoples, the problem, not of what we may consider under the passions of war desirable in the way of punishment and retribution, but of what is possible. And the nearer we get to peace, the more important it becomes to give a clear and "reasonable" answer to that question, for on it will depend the rapidity and completeness of the enemies' collapse and the permanence or impermanence of peace. The position of the extreme Vansittartites, if we may call them so, is not unlike that of Hitler; it is unreasonable and "not convincing" and in some respects "rather silly." It is possible and necessary to destroy the Nazi state and system and army and wipe out the Nazi leaders. If you are enamoured of the idea of retributive punishment, you may call this justice and punishment, for the Nazi leaders are the guilty men and responsible for the horrors of peace and war during the last ten years. But to regard the whole German people as "guilty" and responsible for the crimes of Hitlerism, to attempt to punish them collectively, to set out to destroy their potential power for all time or even for an indefinite period of time and to keep them indefinitely in a condition of international subjection is just war psychology, the most dangerous form of political and historical day dreaming. In a sense all peoples are responsible for the crimes of their governments and in that sense the German people are "responsible" for the last war and for this. That is why it is essential to destroy the German army and German government. But that does not mean that the overwhelming majority of the German people are so irremediably "guilty" that they cannot be trusted for an indefinite period as equal members of the community of peoples. And the crucial point is that, if you want peace, you will have to trust them. To disarm the German army and keep the German people disarmed for a limited period after the war is reasonable and possible. But the whole of history shows that to do that for an unlimited period is impossible. For whatever you may call such a system, it will in effect be an armed alliance of certain states against another state, and the balance of interests and power in such a coalition never has remained and never can remain constant. We have been trying this kind of system in various forms for a century with unvarying and inevitable catastrophe. The only alternative is a coalition for peace into which all the states of Europe which are now our enemies, including Germany, will enter after a limited interval on equal terms. No one can prophesy that such a system will succeed in preventing a third catastrophe, but at least it gives us and the world a last chance; it is not, as the other system is, foredoomed to disaster.

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FIRST ESSENTIALS OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

WHAT is to happen in Europe on the morrow of the cessation of hostilities, or indeed well before hostilities have ceased over Europe as a whole, in the areas first liberated from Nazi oppression? It has been pointed out again and again how disastrous from the standpoint of reconstruction at home is the Government's failure to arrive at any decisions about post-war policy, or even to establish any machinery through which such decisions can be reached. It is less obvious to the public, but no less true, that the Government is guilty of at least as lamentable a failure in the field of international reconstruction. It is true that for some time past discussions have been proceeding, both in this country and in the United States, on the problems of immediate post-war relief in Europe. But how much has come of these discussions; and has anything at all been done as yet to face up to the problem of real reconstruction as distinct from mere relief?

The immediate relief problem is, of course, that of getting supplies of food and other necessary consumption goods as quickly as possible into the hands of the liberated peoples. For this purpose it is necessary to build up stocks in readiness for speedy distribution—or rather, in the case of many commodities, to make arrangements for the distribution of stocks which are already accumulating in the primary-producing countries owing to the shortage of transport. We can, perhaps, feel some confidence that arrangements of this order are actually being made, and that emergency stocks will be actually ready for distribution when the occasion arises. But, if this is so, why has no public announcement been made about the measures which are to be adopted? We can imagine nothing that would have more far-reaching effects in strengthening the opposition in the countries now under German occupation than the clearest possible announcement of the plans that have been proposed for bringing instant succour to the liberated European peoples.

Such an announcement would, however, have to include, as a guarantee of the serious intentions behind it, a clear declaration that it will be the policy of the Governments of the United Nations to maintain the rationing of consumers' supplies in their own countries to any extent that may be necessary in order to ensure that the urgent needs of occupied and devastated Europe shall be fully met. A plain affirmation of the British Government's determination to adopt this policy would go a long way farther than any amount of propaganda to assure the victims of Nazism that Great Britain means to deal fairly by them, and that the United States and Great Britain are linked firmly together in a determination to distribute equitably whatever supplies can be made available during the critical post-war months. Why, then, has no such statement been made? It has been talked of, especially in the United States; but there has been no public assertion of the British Government's attitude.

We can imagine only two possible reasons for not issuing an unequivocal declaration on this issue. One is that the British consumers might not like the prospect of continued rationing until the urgent needs of the European peoples have been met. If this is the objection, we believe it to be unfounded. The British people wants a durable peace, and is well enough aware that the way of getting it is not to starve post-war Europe, including its own allies, into a renewed condition of neurosis leading to war hysteria. The second reason, which we believe to be in fact the more influential, is that there are powerful vested interests which, wishing to see State control ended at the earliest possible moment, are opposed to plans for feeding Europe, not because they wish Europe to starve or fear the resentment of British consumers, but because they feel that any plan for supplying Europe will involve the continuance of control. If, as we believe, this is the real obstacle in the way, the sooner it is squarely faced the better. Control will be imperatively necessary in many fields for a considerable period after the war, if not permanently; and to make plain the Government's determination to maintain it to the full extent to which it may be needed in the interests of Europe as well as of ourselves is among the first requirements of the bold reconstruction programme which ought to have been enunciated long ago.

The question of immediate relief is important; but that of longer-term reconstruction is no less so, and is even more neglected. Relief ought from the earliest possible moment to be organised in such a way as to lead on to the speedy restoration of the productive power of the occupied countries. This involves, among the very earliest measures, the supply of livestock to rebuild the greatly reduced flocks and herds of the European countries, including the Soviet Union. It also involves the supply on a large scale of other agricultural requisites, and of machinery which will enable the local industries producing consumers' goods to get back into full working order as soon as possible. That it further involves the supply of essential raw materials goes without saying; and it is sufficiently evident that all these consignments of goods will have to be sent to Europe at a time when the international purchasing power of the recipients will be in a disorganised state, on account both of their inability immediately to produce goods for export in payment for the necessary imports, and of currency upsets, which will mean that the needy countries will have for the time being no stable basis for exchanges between their own money and that of others.

All these conditions are well known; and on the other side of the Atlantic they are being continually discussed, not only by economists and publicists but also by official spokesmen of the American Government. Why are they not discussed here in equally high quarters; or, if they are being discussed, why is the public told nothing of what is going on, and given no indication that any serious plans are being made? We have no doubt been entertained with certain general expressions of goodwill by Mr. Eden and others; but these have always been cast in a thoroughly non-committal form. The Americans, sometimes with much *naiveté*, and sometimes with a refreshing realism, have been at work upon concrete projects for shaping the international economic future by means of international agencies for the development of backward areas, lease-lend arrangements for world reconstruction, and the creation of international administrative agencies to undertake or supervise the execution of big schemes reminiscent of the Tennessee Valley Authority or the Niagara scheme. On this side, we have originated nothing; and is it even certain that we have not been obstructing what has been originated elsewhere?

One defence of our silence is that America alone will have the resources needed for international economic development after the war, and that it is therefore for the Americans to make the plans. This is simply untrue. In terms of physical capacity to supply the goods that are wanted, we are likely in many fields to be as well equipped as the United States, and in some fields better equipped. The difference is that we shall be faced with a difficulty in paying with exports for the foodstuffs and materials needed by our industries—including materials to be made up into exports—whereas the Americans, having succeeded to our position as the creditor country of the world, will have no similar pressure on their balance of payments. But what this means is not that Great Britain will be unable to produce for export the goods needed by the backward countries; but that there will be an imperative need to secure prompt payment in foodstuffs and raw materials for enough of our exports to satisfy our essential requirements.

This is the point at which the situation becomes delicate, so that certain influential persons in this country think that the less we say about it the better. The backward countries can afford to pay for a substantial proportion of the capital imports needed for their development, provided that they can find customers for their own primary products at prices which will induce their producers to embark on extended forms of output for foreign markets. We in turn can afford to buy their products if they will take our exports in exchange. But at this point up comes the American objection to any practice in foreign trade that is held to savour of "discrimination." For this, it is said, bars us from entering into any kind of barter arrangement with any country on terms which might involve purchases and sales either deviating at all from world prices, or arranged outside the ordinary course of a market open equally to all comers.

What precisely this critical word "discrimination" means nobody at present knows. The Americans themselves have more than once made arrangement for bulk sales and purchases outside the ordinary rules of the market; and they appear, while preaching the virtues of "non-discrimination," to claim for themselves a right to discriminate if other countries are doing the same. Sensible persons in all countries will agree with them that it is highly desirable to encourage the economic international division of labour and to avoid whenever possible methods which result in goods being produced uneconomically as a result of "discriminative" practices. But is this principle to be regarded as ruling out all bulk exchanges between countries on terms agreed in advance, or such clearly sensible practices as the offer to primary purchasers of bulk contracts over a period of time long enough to make it worth their while to go to the expense and trouble of developing their land for the production of particular market crops? It is one thing to say that in general it is a moral duty to buy in the cheapest market, because only on this basis can economic progress be ensured: it is quite another to assume that "buying in the cheapest market" must be interpreted always in a purely momentary sense, and that no account must be taken of longer-run advantages or of the advantage which comes of purchases that do not impose a strain on the balance of payments.

It is probable that fear of raising the bogy of "discrimination" has a good deal to do with the reluctance in British official quarters to say anything concrete about post-war policy in the fields of foreign trade and investment. But is co-operation with the U.S.A. more likely to be effectively secured by burking all the difficulties until the time for immediate action is upon us, or by frank discussion well ahead? It is surely not to be accepted as a fact that the Americans are entirely incapable of seeing wherein our post-war economic position is bound to differ fundamentally from theirs. They will be able to buy where they please without the smallest fear of being embarrassed by difficulties of international payment. We on the other hand shall not; and in any realistic policy account will have to be taken of that difference.

This is not meant to imply that British post-war economic policy ought to be headed towards bilateralism and discrimination. Far from it. It is greatly to our interest to get back to multilateralism as far and as fast as we can. But the extent to which we shall be able to do this is bound to depend on the extent to which American international economic policy takes account of our special difficulties.

This article is, in effect, a plea for two things—first, for a clear and unequivocal declaration of our readiness to play our full part in the tasks of world relief after the war, including areadiness to maintain rationing and control at home until the world's urgent needs have been reasonably met; and secondly for a realistic international policy in the field of long-term world economic reconstruction. On the first of these issues, what is wrong is that a plain declaration has not already been officially made. On the second, what is wrong is that the issues which call for frank international discussion are being buried out of sight, instead of being faced in the spirit of our common cause.

DAILY BREAD IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

For twenty years the world's knowledge of the science of nutrition has advanced. For twenty years the health and strength of our people has increased. In each of these fields, British science and practice have played noteworthy parts. Knowledge certainly has been, as so often, in advance of practice, but for all that the practical gains have been great. These gains have not been the maximum possible, and hence there is impatience and chiding, both justified, but in a world where so many things have gone back, it is worth taking note of some that have gone forward, since it is from achievement as well as from criticism that inspiration is drawn.

The science of nutrition is the science of the working and renewal of flesh and blood—and flesh and blood have always seemed so different from everything else that the whole conception of their working is a matter of yesterday. The particular puzzle of assimilation, that of taking alien substances and literally incorporating them—turning them into part of oneself—is so remarkable as to have been always dismissed simply as a mystery. It remains the master-riddle, for all that we know about it, much more incredible, really, than reproduction. That Plato should beget Plato is noteworthy, but not inherently unlikely. That Plato, by means of any mechanism, should take a piece of a pig, or a tree, or of daily bread, and transform them into Plato, is the sort of thing one would necessarily dismiss as absurd, if it did not happen everywhere and every hour. Till recent times the whole affair was wrapped in a convenient bundle, and labelled as "due to the play of the vital forces," like the mock medieval definition of a timepiece, which was that it told the time by virtue of the principle of horologicity which it contained. The puzzle, however, became more involved rather than less, when it appeared that most of these processes were taking place according to laws which were identical with those operating in the "inanimate" world.

One of the earliest investigations to be worked out along exact scientific lines was that of combustion. The fact that one atom of carbon unites with two atoms of oxygen and gives off exactly the same amount of heat (and thus of potential energy) whether this combination takes place in Plato's brain or under the boiler of a steam engine was sufficiently startling to preoccupy investigators for a very long time. The energy value, the fuel value, of food became a matter which could be, and was, determined along the simple lines of reducing it to carbon and counting how much carbon it contained. Since the carbon is going to end up as carbon dioxide, all the intermediate stages can be taken as read. This can be checked on the live creature—the simplest for this purpose is the human being. Since carbon dioxide is a gas it is eliminated by air. All the air channels end in the windpipe. At first the human being was asked to stay for a long period—a day, two days, or more—in a special room, with special arrangements to collect the air he exhaled. Later, it was realised that this was quite unnecessary. If the individual breathed out into a bag, and a proper and sufficient number of samples were so taken, the oxidised carbon, CO_2, could be collected, and the actual results determined, against the theoretical results demanded by the chemical equation. The results do check up to the closest fraction. These facts, even though known, are so unlikely that they are continually lost sight of. At the beginning of the last war, for instance, an official publication assured the public that a diminution in the quantity of food available could easily be remedied by chewing it more thoroughly—for which there is not an atom of evidence. Even towards its end, John Orr and E. P. Cathcart were working desperately against time to prevent the War Cabinet from reducing the rations of the fighting troops, and did prevent it, by getting out a balance-sheet proving the mechanical necessity for every ounce of energy supplied to the front-line man. Indeed, here is still a belief in popular, and even in exlted circles, that a coolie can live on " a handful f rice," or that " concentrated foods " exist, by hich, say, a year's supply for a man could be eadily carried, or absorbed by him, so as to bviate the whole necessity of our daily bread. These things are just as impossible as the petrol ubstitute which will enable a motor-car to proluce energy without a corresponding intake; nd just as widely credited, since it is a fundaental human belief that somewhere, somehow, ou can get something for nothing.

It would take too long to review the stages of e next hunt, the investigation of the working of e machine, or rather the crucible, in which all his takes place, and the move up of the proteins, e nitrogen-containing molecules, to the middle f the picture. It is enough to say that this inestigation had as its master-key the element itrogen, an indispensable constituent of the ving cell, and that a further range of intricate nowledge was opened up by such work. This d to Gowland Hopkins's discovery of the accesory food factors, later called vitamins, which n enthusiastic hands gave rise to a whole alphabet f " essential factors." There was, indeed, for a ime, a danger of losing sight of the wood because f the bewildering variety of trees. Later the lder knowledge began to be taken up as a whole, nd particularly the work of the earliest investiators, who had emphasised also the fact that ertain ordinary elements, " inorganic " as they ere called, were just as indispensable to life as arbon itself. " Without phosphorus no life," aid, for example, one of the earliest and greatest orkers of all. Indeed, the more one analyses e cell, the longer does the list of indispensable lements become, so that some of us consider that the end it will be found that the majority, or ndeed the sum, of all the elements is present in very living thing ; which would solve the probem of Plato and the pig in an unexpected and ather ennobling fashion.

All this may sound far-fetched, when the mmediate problem is what a man—or a woman or child—should have for dinner, but that is not o. Unless those working on a subject are suffiiently interested to brood and speculate endlessly n all its aspects, both useful and useless, they ill not be sufficiently enthusiastic to set light to e interest of the common man. Until his nterest is aroused no head of steam can be raised ufficient to drive through the practical steps hich are necessary before thought can be transted into action.

In Great Britain this interest has certainly been roused. A continual succession of books, sureys, pamphlets and statistics upon nutrition, has ecently appeared. Nor has this attention been t all fruitless. A most valuable recent book on his subject by Professor J. R. Marrack* points ut that about 1934 the whole public policy with egard to food changed in Great Britain. He is ight in his surmise that this was not wholly ndependent of the desire to bring consumption p to the level of production. Much of the imulse came from agriculturists, and indeed from e Ministry of Agriculture, but the practical oint of importance is that without the rousing f popular interest to support such a policy, that esire would have remained as unsatisfied as any others. Professor Marrack's book is a storeouse of information, a storehouse which would be bsolutely invaluable were it not that the book is evoid of an index. This is a real want, because e book contains, in addition to much valuable echnical information upon the scientific side of utrition, several carefully compiled chapters on e application of all this knowledge, both in the st war and in the present, on the Continent as ell as here at home. It is rather a pity that ccasionally he should have wandered off into ertain statements displaying an unfamiliarity ith other subjects on which he comments—uch as his opinion that there exists a common " authority " in the British Empire, or that in England the farmer's output of milk has been limited, but these may well be neglected in a review so extensive. For he has the root of the matter in him, an enormous interest, and an overriding humanity. Early in his book occurs the encouraging sentence, " It will be a sad time when children, and adults for that matter, cease to look on a meal as something to eat and enjoy." In fact, a little bit of what you fancy does you good ; and that profound Cockney sentiment pointing as it does to appetite, opens the door to the next set of questions on this subject, to which all the work which has gone before is merely the foundation.

WALTER ELLIOT

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* " Food and Planning " by J. R. Marrack. Victor Gollancz. 15s.

A LONDON DIARY

THE American elections will not simplify Mr. Roosevelt's problems in these next two years But I doubt whether more than a handful of the results had any serious relation to national issues in which the President's influence was involved. In the off year, the local situation always counts more than the national ; and, indeed, there is a vital sense in which America has no parties on a national basis. but rather a loose confederation of state parties. The unhappiest result was the defeat of Senator Norris, of Nebraska ; his departure is like taking away its conscience from the Senate. He had that place apart in the political life of America which John Bright had in England in the era of Palmerston. He paid the price of the Administration's conscience that there must be a ceiling to farm prices.

* * *

Since Mr. Farley insisted on providing New York with the dullest candidate the Democrats have had for governor these thirty years, Mr. T. E. Dewey had a walk-over in his campaign. It will be interesting to watch his manœuvres for the Presidential nomination in 1944. He was a showy District Attorney, with a passion for publicity, but he did not impress his fellow-lawyers either as a pleader in the Court or as the organiser of a case. His political ideas are pretty crude and mostly second or third hand. The real result of his election may well be the repetition of the situation in the Republican Convention of 1920 when the deadlock between Governor Lowden and General Wood was resolved by the nomination of Senator Harding ; if Mr. Willkie retains his popularity, it would not surprise me if someone like Senator Taft, of Ohio, squeezed in between the two. But if Mr. Dewey does get the nomination, I venture the guess that a Democratic President will succeed Mr. Roosevelt. For compared to a man like Mr. Henry Wallace, the Vice-President, or, maybe, Mr. Justice Douglas, of the Supreme Court, Mr Dewey would make ex-Governor Landon look like a really strong candidate. Anyhow, the Republican machine will make the nomination next time ; and there will be a full measurement of Mr. Dewey's weaknesses by the time the Convention is due. And those weaknesses are only likely to help his candidature if the " big shots " decide, as in 1920, that they have the election " in the bag."

* * *

I hope it is not wishful thinking that has made everyone I have spoken to this week feel that there was an air of solidarity about the African victory which was absent from its predecessors. It seems to have had a new massiveness, a background of regularity in the rhythm of its preparation, which give one a sense of special confidence. It was interesting to hear in the soldiers' talk in the trains the electric effect it has had upon them. For over sixteen months they have felt this was Russia's war ; now it has become " our " war again. If the advance goes right on, it may well make a vital difference very quickly to the war. It is evident that there is not elbow-room for many more serious disasters in Italy. I suspect that Mussolini quite frequently sees the ghosts of Mateotti and Carlo Roselli in the shadows of that immense room down which, to give him prestige, his visitors had to slide their way.

I hope that the 56th Report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure, which deals with the organisation and control of the Civil Service, will be widely read ; it is, I think, within its scope, the best document on the Machinery of Government we have had since the Haldane Report. Its most important suggestion is the creation in each session of a standing committee of the House, with an official at its disposal comparable to the Comptroller and Auditor-General, to report to Parliament on the working of the Departments. The idea is a brilliant one, in some ways as significant a suggestion in the field of administration as we have had since Bentham's time. I am an old enthusiast for the Select Committee's other idea of a Civil Service Staff College. But on this there are two remarks I venture to make. First, a Staff College is not much use unless there is, first, a thorough overhaul of the machinery of appointment and promotion in the service ; the Committee has not touched this issue, though I hope the Prime Minister's reported inquiry into government machinery will do so. Secondly, I think a Staff College in which civil servants mix with other civil servants would create the wrong atmosphere. What is needed is that the able young official should meet other able young men in his field who compel him to examine the foundations of his thinking. He ought to meet there the promising young trade union official and the assistant-manager of a big public utility. There is enough segregation of civil servants from the world already.

* * *

I quoted the other week a letter from a Canadian correspondent who compared the B.B.C. Overseas bulletins with the comments of men like Mr. E. R. Murrow, very much to the detriment of the former. A friend of mine, who is a specialist in these matters, suggests to me that the comparison is not really fair. The B.B.C. is sending out a news summary subject to severe conditions of censorship, the American commentator picks out his item of news and, security apart, can say largely what he pleases. My friend thinks, too, that Mr. Murrow would have far less scope in New York than he has in London ; it is distance from his controls that gives him his freedom. I think there is a good deal in this, though there are two things it tempts me to say. First, isn't it really about time that the B.B.C. officials made a fight for the right—in which I am well aware many of them believe—to real comment and discussion ? And, secondly, is it likely that men of Mr. Murrow's incisive and downright mind will be willing to serve a body like the B.B.C. until it has made a fight for the opportunity to be really controversial ? If, as I am told, that means a struggle with the Foreign Office on the international side, and with the Prime Minister on the domestic, the answer, of course, is that the struggle is long overdue. The Foreign Office, over things like Italy and Hungary, has the aloof unrealism of a faded Victorian photograph ; and the Prime Minister just does not want to be troubled with fearful groans from the 1922 Committee. These do not seem to me sufficient grounds for the present emasculated atmosphere. If I were Sir Cecil Graves or Mr. Robert Foot I should refuse to allow even the Prime Minister to make me a professional maiden aunt to the listeners of the world. As for Foreign Office control, the memoirs of any professional diplomat published in the last twenty years would justify the B.B.C. fighting for independence.

* * *

The American elections and the offensive in Africa sent me back to Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* which seems to me to have claims to be regarded as the greatest sociological work of the nineteenth century. The chapter on the place of the army and war in democratic life is quite masterly ; and, written as it was 107 years ago, its prophetic insight seems to me superb. It is really a scandal that this very great book should not be available in any handy reprint. If Sir Humphrey Milford or Messrs. Dent want to do a supreme service to democratic thinking they would make this available cheaply as soon as possible; and I think Mr. Bracken might even be persuaded to consider the paper for it as outside the quota. I wish the American Outpost and Mr. R. A. Butler would interest themselves in this proposal. No one ought to teach American history or government who does not know *Democracy in America* to be the best book ever written by the citizen of one country on the institutions and habits of another.

* * *

For real rigidity of dogma, the little group of *laissez-faire* economists, of whom, Professor L. Mises is the high priest, beat any religious sect that has ever come my way. There are in South Africa a number of mixed councils to promote native welfare. It was recently proposed by one of them to support the formation and recognition of Bantu trade unions. I understand that the Professor of Economics in the local university, who was a member of the Council, threatened to resign if this were done on the ground that it is logically incontrovertible that trade unions are bound to injure the welfare of the working class. This, I may add, is the economist who wrote of Mills's approval of the trade unions that " unfortunately he was unable to discipline his sympathies with their strivings." The book from which I quote this sentence is, quite unconsciously, one of the funniest books I have ever read. It also explains why the breath of reality Lord Keynes brought into the academic ivory tower seemed so shocking to some of his learned brethren.

HAROLD J. LASKI

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to B. Greenough.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

The remarkable circumstances in which Edward Winter, a taxi proprietor, of Gresford, was alleged to have wasted motor fuel were related before the Wrexham County Magistrates yesterday. Complaints have been received by the police, who kept observation on the Wrexham golf links and saw the defendant driving his taxi along the fairway. Asked to explain, Winter replied that he had a 93-year-old player inside who was too weak to walk. —*Manchester Guardian.*

Men are moved by ideals, as wartime propaganda proves. They will die to make a world safe for democracy even twice in a lifetime.—*New Statesman.*

" It was quite a thrilling moment when the U-boat sank," he said, " but such is the sang-froid of the modern British seaman that there was no burst of cheering, only a little polite hand-clapping from the gun crews."—*Reynolds News.*

Armistice & Victory Celebrations. The Dagenham Girl Pipers invite advance applications now for Priority Bookings for Carnivals, Fêtes, Balls, & outdoor or indoor celebrations. Bands of 15 performers. Dagenham Girl Pipers.—Advt. in *Manchester Guardian.*

Wanted for quiet country hotel, vegetable man or woman . . .—Advt. in *Evening Standard.*

Sir,—Could any of your readers inform me what steps I should take in order to induce the authorities in Southampton to change the note emitted by their syren which now precisely coincides with that of my " Hoover." The result is that when the maid starts work in the morning the entire household takes refuge in the air raid shelter and remains there until she sounds the " All Clear." This is very disturbing to the domestic routine.—Letter in *Hampshire Chronicle.*

GENIUS FOR UNDER-STATEMENT

(After Lord Macaulay.)

Now glory to our great Ally in her triumphant hour!
And glory to her C.-in-C., tall General Eisenhower!
Indomitable is the force he landed from the sea,
And south he strikes to Mogador and east to Tripoli!
False Darlan has surrendered; Algiers is in his hands,
The Bey of Tunis, trembling, submits to his commands.
De Gaulle has called the Fighting French to swell the grand advance,
And save from traitor hirelings the pleasant land of France!
Hurrah for General Eisenhower and Général Giraud!
(And, by the way, the British Fleet is putting up a show.)

Hurrah for the Red Army that stood at Moscow's gate,
And drove the mighty Wehrmacht back with all its armoured weight!
Twice have the Panzer spearheads thrust, and twice been held at bay,
Oh, never in the tale of war was such a bloody fray!
Now Stalingrad's defenders stand, now the invader falls,
And cold and stiff and stark they lie beneath her blackened walls.
The army that was hurled against the ramparts of the east
Across the vast and icy steppes crawls like a wounded beast.
Now General Winter takes the field, the Russian wolf-packs hunt.
(And, by the way, the British have pulled off a second front.)

Now God be thanked for China and for gallant Chiang Kai-shek!
Right well he led the five-year fight to keep the foe in check!
A hundred times the Japanese seemed closing in a ring,
A hundred times fell back before the onslaught from Chungking!
Our Allies, Free Chinese stand firm against the ruthless foe
And fling back their defiance to the war-lords of Tokyo!
And now the Japs are driven from their bases in Chekiang
Bursts from the line a deafening shout, " Give praise for General Chiang!
The enemy is in retreat! Pursue him as he flies!"
(And, by the way, the R.A.F. is cleaning up the skies.)

Ho! maidens of Vienna; ho! matrons of Berlin,
Reich victory, so long proclaimed, is but a might-have-been.
Weep, weep and rend your hair for those who will return no more,
For Russians and Americans have turned the tide of war!
Ho! leaders of the Axis hordes, your forces are in flight!
Ho! craven lord of Italy, keep watch and ward to-night!
Trapped Rommel in the desert flees before his broken ranks,
The sands are heaped with guns and gear and trucks and burnt-out tanks.
The captured forts of Libya haul down the German flag.
(And, by the way, Montgomery has Rommel in the bag.)

SAGITTARIUS

ALL SOULS' DAY

On All Souls' Day a year ago, with hundreds of other Londoners, I listened to the Brahms *Requiem* in Southwark Cathedral. It was the right day for this music. This solemn festival has always moved me more than any other in the year, since in the Balkans I watched the peasant women placing food on the gravestones for the Blessed Souls, who return at this season to earth. I came near believing that by the intensity of their longing the bereaved do for a moment bring back their dead. In this building, as in all ancient churches, there are no frontiers between present and past; under its dim arches the vanished centuries live on, eternal as its stones. In this place I had heard the *Requiem* during the last war: I hope I may not live to hear it in the next.

Then, as now, women in black sat near me, and I was thankful when their sad faces were shrouded in veils. Then, as now, young men in all the pride of their strength, wearing every uniform of the King's service, listened in advance to the music they will miss when their shattered bodies are buried in the sands of Africa or the waters of the Atlantic. Nothing composer ever wrote, unless it be the Ninth Symphony or the Matthew Passion, moves me quite as this *Requiem* does, almost beyond endurance. But I can never forget, above all not in wartime, that Johannes Brahms named it " *Ein Deutsches Requiem.*" It was not that he meant to give it a nationalist tinge: he was the last man to descend to that pettiness as he stood in the shadow of death. He called it a German requiem, simply because he had himself drawn its touching and exalted words, not from the traditional Latin sources but from the homely yet stately German of Luther's Bible. After it had died away in the simple and consoling strains of the last chorus—how wise Brahms was, after he had rent our hearts and opened for us the dazzling glories of the invisible, how wise he was to end so gently—a collection was taken at the door for the Russian wounded. I gave to it gladly—a strange word to use—for I have known the rigours of a Russian winter. But it was in summer, behind the front near Minsk, that I once watched an endless procession of springless peasant carts, jolting over the imaginary roads their loads of wounded soldiers of the Red Army. In vain in the dust and the heat they sighed for doctor or nurse to tend them. That scene from 1920 came back to my burdened memory and the trumpets of Brahms's celestial hymn of triumph rang out for me in vain. Death on these battlefields has after all its sting. I gave my coin—it could serve no better purpose than this—but it crossed my mind that I would have given it as gladly to buy an anaesthetic for the German wounded also. My neighbours, to right and left of me, had recited the creed, while I stood silent. " I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints . . ." I will never say these words, but in my own mind it may be they have a meaning to which I can assent.

Through weeks and months the glorious music haunted my memory. This evening, since All Souls' Day has come round again, I recollected that I have some old and rather inadequate records of the nobler numbers of the *Requiem*: I would play them on my gramophone. Very gently and reverently it started, *pianissimo*, with the briefest orchestral introduction, and then the chorus began to sing. " Blessed are they that mourn . . ."? Not at all. " Selig sind die da Leid tragen." I had forgotten that my records were in the enemy's language. And so it went on: through those desolating sentences from Ecclesiastes to that terrible rhythm in the bass which withers our bones to faded grass as we listen: on to the triumphant recoil of the marching tune, " And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion rejoicing." But when it came to the tender beauty of the next chorus, what these fresh young voices sang was not " How lovely are thy dwellings," but " Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen."

What in the name of pity are we doing to-day, we and these German singers? The words, be they English or German, have the same meaning in Southwark and Berlin. We heard them for the first time, we and they, each in some Gothic church, where faith has held the grey stones erect for centuries. Their memories of that first hearing go back, it may be, to the church with the round nave in Cologne, as mine go back to its fellow of the same century in the Temple. Both lie in ruins to-day. The slightly archaic Saxon of Luther's translation affects them as the Tudor English of the authorised version affects us. And the music? Do we not mourn when they mourn and triumph to the same clarion notes? The same subtle sequences of sound bring tears to their eyes as to ours while we listen, and our hearts beat in step with theirs when Brahms sets us marching to Zion. These young men who sang this great music many a year ago as students at the Singakademie in Berlin, while Hitler was still an outlaw, where are they now? Clad in field-grey they lie unburied on the Volga's banks. They, too, had stood and heard the creed that preceded it; perhaps they said it, as I did not, and crossed themselves after they sang: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints . . ." "Communion of Saints": is this all we can make of it? A common grave dug in the sands of Africa in which the young men, theirs and ours, may lie pell-mell.

The barbarian came between us, for whom there is neither Catholic Church nor Communion of Saints. How did it happen? I found myself reviewing the past, while the Biblical words still spoke to me in Brahms's rhythms, and some things stood out for me with a new simplicity. I do not mean the events, the successive acts of violence and self-assertion. Something more decisive than any event had happened long before Munich. During fourteen years, sometimes in coalition, two groups of men had governed republican Germany, the Catholics of the Centre and the Social-Democrats. Sharply though they differed, they had managed to work together. Why? Because at bottom both believed in the brotherhood and equality of mankind. They may have phrased it in very different words. The Catholics cannot wholly forget the noble dream of the Middle Ages, when the Church sought to unite all men in a single faith and claimed from princes obedience to its law of peace, since they and their peoples were all of them members of one Church and children of one Father. What the Socialists felt was especially the fraternity of all who do honest work for the common good, often exploited, sometimes enslaved, and they embraced in this wide brotherhood not merely the workers of Europe, Jews as well as Aryans, Slavs no less than Germans, but the coloured peoples also. Few Socialists would repeat the Catholic creed: few Catholics would sing the International. And yet, because each in his own way believed in the equality and brotherhood of man, they both sustained the Republic and supported the League. The Nazis understood this fundamental identity for they used to sneer at the black International and the red.

This common ideal of brotherhood and equality was swept away by the Nazi doctrine of racial ascendancy. They made an end in Germany of the effort in which Catholics and Socialists could unite, the effort to see as brothers men who differ from us in language, tradition and it may be in the colour of their skins. In its place they erected their doctrine of the superiority of the Nordic race, by which they meant themselves, and drew from it their title to rule and use, to conquer and exploit the rest of mankind. The shoddy science with which they backed this creed was bad enough. Worse still, it was necessarily an armed doctrine. Logically it could bring with it only what in fact it has brought—hatred and fear and universal war.

I found myself as All Souls' Day came round again recalling these simple fundamental things. On them in the long run turns the fate of mankind. It all comes down, I think, to something even simpler. What is our instinctive attitude towards men who differ at first sight very markedly from us, because they have black skins or Semitic features, or because they talk a language like Polish, which has some very distinctive sounds. Some of us begin with fear. What is strange may be dangerous. And then because we must not give way to fear, we assert our own immeasurable superiority. It is clear from *Mein Kampf* that this is Hitler's attitude—he fears Jews, he fears Poles, and then he pulls himself up and pretends that he despises them, so that he may have courage to vanquish them. The other attitude, whether we state it in Christian or in Socialist terms, begins with interest, even with friendly curiosity. This man is different, therefore he has something new to give me, perhaps something to teach me: and maybe I have something to give him. We can share, we can work together: we are "neighbours" as the Gospels have it, or comrades and fellow-workers as Socialists put it. The first attitude—fear—means eternal war on earth: in the other attitude alone is there the hope of peace. It is our fate that we must fight the Nazi attitude of domineering fear with tanks and aeroplanes, fight it till it is overthrown in the field. But our victory will be barren unless we can build our new order on the braver attitude of understanding and co-operation.

On this All Souls' Day that beautiful phrase from the creed that I had heard in Southwark Cathedral haunted me still—"The Communion of Saints." What does it mean? That the dead who have served man and God faithfully are still with us, to help and to inspire. So I tried in that great cloud of witnesses to see especially the great dead who came from another race—Russians and Germans—Tolstoy and Brahms and Immanuel Kant, and I caught sight among them of two poets I once knew, the Indian Tagore and the American negro James Welldon Johnson. Let us remember, even amid the battle, the "Communion of Saints."

H. N. Brailsford

POEM

The birds no longer fly
Across crag-darkened lakes,
The mists come down like ghosts
Upon their barns and ricks;
Sunlight recedes, and salt-sharp from the sea
The leaping winds torment this crouching land,
Thunder about the tree
That leans against their shuttered house.

Under the creaking floors, inside the walls,
Bright-eyed, the rats squeal in the falling dust,
Only the beetles do not hear the squalls
Worrying home the lost bird to its nest.

They are the last sad tenants of the house,
The duped inheritors of rotting fields,
Of ditches truculent with weeds,
Whose wells stones throttle, whose gay crops
Are harvested by rain and wrecking storm.

Their headlands run down to the growling sea,
Down to the talon rocks where goats
Live off the bitter grass and briny hedge,
The coves are littered with their season's toil
Where wrecks sprawl on the pebbles, broken-
  ribbed.

The gulls scream in the sky,
Rooks' woods are bare,
Each road leads to the starving villages.
Under stone crosses spectral lovers sleep,
Who once were beautiful, who could not escape
From the slow poverty of years.

These are days when eyes
Turn inward, knowing the lies
A season's promises never could make true.
These are the days of losses realised.
The smoke from low fires does not comfort them.

Winter indeed has come
Into this house of grief,
The weeping stranger who brings no relief,
Darkens the threshold and the floor
And, entering, unlocks the door.

G. M. Brady.

THE MOVIES

"The War Against Mrs. Hadley," at the Empire

"Road to Morocco," at the Plaza

The war comes to Mrs. Hadley when she is giving one of her stately birthday parties; Jap bombs, on the wireless, break into Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, and the parlour-maid drops the coffee-set in the hall. Well, the parlour-maid has a brother at Pearl Harbour, but don't let it happen again! It does happen again, though, in a series of extraordinary slights and intrusions. Mrs. Winter, whom one doesn't speak to nowadays, fills her drawing-room with first-aid classes and, when one looks up one's oldest friend, it's to find that she has slipped off to Mrs. Winter's; the butler puts on a ridiculous tin hat to bother with black-outs; daughter works in a canteen and gets engaged to a soldier; son becomes a mere soldier himself—oh, where, where is it all going to end? With son winning the D.S.C., daughter producing a war baby, Mrs. Winter reconciled, Tchaikovsky laid by, butler giving A.R.P. lectures in the library, and hearts everywhere as trumps. Mrs. Hadley makes us laugh and bristle, and then cry, and then smile and nod through our tears. It all goes to show—what exactly? That the Mrs. Hadleys with money and a big house in Washington resent war, resent it personally, and are in the rearguard when it comes to proving that their hearts are in the right place. But when they do, more or less, fall in with others, that only goes to show. The level of emotions in *The War Against Mrs. Hadley* is very easily reached, and the familiar telegraph boy on a bicycle comes and goes as chorus. In the end Mrs. Hadley (charmingly and skilfully played by Miss Fay Bainter) has done all the "human" things she would never have done in peacetime; including, by the way, giving interviews to the press which we should have admired her more for withholding. There is a case even for preferring Tchaikovsky to the nine o'clock news. The real drama, however, of loyalties and reservations is barely touched on; both satire and sentiment run along well-worn grooves of melodrama. Mrs. Hadley unbends, but lacks the true dignity to unbend from. A War Department head is shocked by each phase of Japanese aggression: "this is the most outrageous treachery in history." Life in the army "makes a man" of everybody. War, in fact, becomes a universal improver, while dispensing tragedies in the lists of the fallen. *The War Against Mrs. Hadley* doesn't bring us as close to things even as *Mrs. Miniver*, though it is a film of the sort one can't help enjoying in wartime and despising afterwards. Agreeable performances, not only from Miss Bainter, but also from the unfailing second rank of Hollywood: Edward Arnold especially, and Sara Allgood. Also in the Empire programme is the Crown Unit film, *We Sail at Midnight*, which I recommended strongly last week.

"Those three musketeers of mirth and melody—Bing Crosby, Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour—have made their third Paramount screen journey to somewhere." I missed the two earlier journeys, despite Bob Hope; Crosby and Lamour in the same picture suggested anguish beyond human endurance. My opinion of Mr. Crosby changed considerably after his performance as the millionaire in *Palm Beach Story*. He and Bob Hope make a brilliant pair of comedians, and the beginning of the *Road to Morocco* is wildly funny. Alas, a vaudeville act can't last a whole film, and Morocco (nothing topical!) is here the dear old land of musicals. Whenever Hope and Crosby get cracking funniness revives. There are pretty surrealist touches. Miss Lamour keeps drifting in. Oh, I know that many people can't live from one day to the next without their dreams of Miss Lamour, but I can. She has for me the unsullied charm of putty.

William Whitebait

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Vaughan-Williams, at the Royal Albert Hall

Gustav Mahler, at the Orpheum, Golders Green

Last week-end provided opportunities, rare in wartime, of hearing three works well outside the standard concert repertoire. At the Albert Hall on Saturday the Royal Choral Society paid tribute to Dr. Vaughan-Williams on his seventieth birthday, by inviting him to conduct them and the London Philharmonic Orchestra in two of his larger choral works, the early *Sea Symphony*, and the *Dona Nobis Pacem*, which belongs to those miserable pre-war years which produced a menacing speech from Hitler every month and a major crisis every March and September. Both works draw on Walt Whitman for their words, and despite the separation of time have surprisingly much in common. Admirably as they are laid out, imaginative and magnificent as are the choral perspectives and the finely judged climaxes, there remains, none the less, a sense of inflation; the themes, the actual musical ideas, which fill out these echoing spaces seem too often to be perfunctory and incommensurate with the scale of their setting. It is the fault of a period (compare Strauss, Mahler, Elgar), and one which in his less monumental works Vaughan-Williams successfully avoids.

Das Lied von der Erde at Golders Green. All honour to Messrs. Boosey and Hawkes for their courage in attempting such a transplantation. The obstacles to success were formidable; an auditorium which acoustically is not very kind to singers, an English contralto (the intelligent Miss Astra Desmond) with an English cold, a conductor and orchestra (Sir Adrian Boult and the L.P.O.) who cannot naturally feel akin to this introspective, passionate, melancholy Viennese Jew. To make things worse, somebody had insisted on the use of an English translation. It can be guessed that the thermometer readings were on the low side; the surprise was that so much of the authentic feeling survived, enough, at any rate, to stir a packed house to notable enthusiasm. Great care and considerable rehearsal had gone to produce this far from unsatisfactory result. The tenor, Mr. Peter Pears, showed understanding of the music; but in the first song, as with all other tenors who essay this work, one merely caught a glimpse of his head bobbing about from time to time amid the great eddies and washes of orchestral tone. About the music one had the same mixed feelings as before: it is not, cannot be, "great," and yet one cannot forget it; it is eternally fascinating, this diary of a disappointed musician.

"Best Bib and Tucker," at the Palladium

"Chessington Circus Comes to Town," at the Scala Theatre

George Black's *Best Bib and Tucker* is not of utility make; in fact this production is as lavish as any seen on the Palladium stage. Tommy Trinder, supported by a more than average music hall cast, chatters away merrily, and, as one would expect from his publicity ("You lucky people") showed no embarrassment in heading the bill; instead he caused a lot to late-comers in the stalls. His impersonation of Carmen Miranda in her most come-hither mood was one of the best turns of the evening. But the delightful clowning of the Cairoli Bros. comes first. These two players of many musical instruments are brilliantly original, and we hope that they will remain in London. The one sketch in the performance, "Listening to the Six O'clock News," though amusing, lacked the satire that one has come to expect from revue. From modern America to mediaeval Rheims is a far cry, but in the scenes depicting American music and in the staging of "The Jackdaw of Rheims" the producer, assisted by Wendy Toye, has done a very good job in grouping and lighting.

A circus in a theatre starts with the disadvantage of seeming very far away; one misses the stable smell, the sawdust spattered on the ringside seats by the bareback rider's heavy grey. It is clear, watching a show as small as Chessington Circus, how much the big circuses owed to the troop of near-hussars moving enormous carpets about, the endless clowns spilled out between the acts, the general lavishness. But with less glamour goes less cruelty. There are no lions padding uneasily on and off their stands, lions which not even Togare's flash and dash could make appear less miserable. Instead we have Mr. Olsen's sea-lion Billy, whiskery and charming as ever, and clapping himself as often. "The Original Garcis" are outstanding acrobats; the nonchalant backward slide down a rope from the gallery to the footlights is authentic heart-in-mouth. Mlle. Lipskowska has presence and some well-trained Liberty horses, and "The Marvellous Carsons" do fast work with ropes and knives. There is rather too much padding in the way of dancing, and the clowns lack the small insistent idiosyncrasies which are the mark of good clowning. Not a show for collectors of "international" acts, but an entertainment for the young or a backward glimpse for the faithful, hungering after Schumanns and Colleanos.

Stanley Spencer

The exhibition of Stanley Spencer's work at the Leicester Galleries is important; for Spencer is one of the remarkable men of our time. Precisely what else he is one can hardly say. Like Blake, he is an unconvincing painter; and unlike Blake, he cannot resort to verse and prose when he finds his brush unequal to the task he would set it. Apparently he feels and thinks on a high level, and accomplishes—for he is an accomplished craftsman—on a low. His realisation is intense and vivid, yet commonplace; but Stanley Spencer is not a common man. With works of which the form is too big for the content we are only too familiar; Spencer's form—such as it is—is not so much too small for the content as utterly inappropriate. Though he thinks in shapes Spencer is not essentially a visual artist. Maybe such men have to invent, not a form, but an art of their own. If so, Spencer has failed in that his expression remains far below his imagination. His art is sometimes compared with that of the German primitives, sometimes with that of the pre-Raphaelites. Only superficially does it resemble either. Spencer is nothing if not original.

Correspondence

THE CHURCH AND THE SCHOOLS

Sir,—One is grateful for the penetrating analysis of the proposals of the National Society of the Church of England which appears in your issue of last week; one is equally disturbed and alarmed at the spirit of defeatism which it expresses. You show quite clearly that the proposals are designed, in the main, to perpetuate the wasteful, reactionary dual system; to maintain the grip of the Church and the parsons upon thousands of schools, tens of thousands of teachers, and some million or more school children. Yet, after clearly indicating the profoundly reactionary nature of the proposals, you conclude that "On balance, therefore, we think the price is worth paying," though, as you correctly state, "it does little save harm both to the children and their teachers." Why should we pay this price to the Church for a scheme which will do little but harm to scholars and teachers?

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the proposals do not contain a single suggestion for that real advance in education which the country demands. There might have been some disposition to compromise with the Church if the Church had concerned itself about real educational equality of opportunity for all children. For years we have cried aloud for secondary education for all, yet all the Church can offer us for the post-war world is a sanction to reorganise our elementary schools, provided public money is secured to effect it.

The charge against the dual system does not come merely from secularists. In a recent and much discussed document, published by the Board of Education, we are told: "The legal safeguards and the divided responsibilities of the dual system have given rise to endless complications in administration, which retard educational progress, engender friction and consume time and energies which could be spent to much better purpose. The system is inconsistent with proper economy and efficiency." The proposals of the Church will not abolish this system; rather will they more deeply entrench it.

It would take too long to register my objections in detail. But one might ask: Why should the Church cling to its control of the schools in the single school areas? The reason is not an educational one. It means clerical dominance over children and teachers in the villages of England, and is fraught with social and political significance. Why should the Church in any area have public money to perpetuate clerical control over any schools? Is the justification found in any educational reasons? We know it is not. We may as well face the issue squarely. Either the secular solution, or grants which bear the whole cost of new Church schools, will have to be adopted by the state. The issue cannot be dodged, because no advance in education can take place without dealing with it. The Church is too poor either to maintain her present schools or to erect new ones. The financial burden of the maintenance and provision must fall upon the state. The way out has been clearly envisaged by the T.U.C. In any case, if the Church is to receive public money there must be complete public control, and we must be assured that the Church stands, as an organised body, for raising the school age to 16; for parity of conditions in all schools; for unifying and extending our educational system. In these proposals the Church is only concerned about its own interests, and we should therefore offer them vigorous and persistent opposition. My organisation will certainly resist them.
EVELYN DENINGTON
Secretary, National Association
of Labour Teachers

Sir,—May I make a comment upon the article in your issue of November 7th concerning the church and the schools?

The vital issues concern the type of education to be given in State-aided schools. Shall instruction be turned into methods of ecclesiastical propaganda? A machinery would be set up to administer a State-supported orthodoxy. It would be capable of very different use by, for example, a future Fascist Government. Tests for teachers arise as a matter of course; the rights of responsible minorities are overlooked. In return Dr. Temple offers a compromise which promises to raise the standard of the existing church schools. The recent T.U.C. decision does not suggest that it has popular support.

In practice, educational reform is being intimidated by a church which has never been a genuine friend of popular instruction and which only includes as active members some 8 per cent. of the population. The fact that the compromise of 1870 was unsatisfactory does not suggest that it should be further weakened in a "rightward" direction. Nor do the times call for an extension of the grants, already over-generous, to the denominational schools.

I would urge the secular solution. Let the State confine itself to secular subjects; religious instruction, where desired, can be given by churches and chapels in their own time at their own expense. Educational reform is badly needed in such directions as that of equality of opportunity and in the level of instruction. Past experience does not suggest that these ends will be attained by trusting the Church of England with its strong Tory alliances.
F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT
(Hon. Sec., Secular Education League)

RETAILERS AND DR. DALTON

Sir,—I think that the writer of your last week's paragraph, "Retailer in Trouble," can never have met the President of the Board of Trade as I have. Had he done so, he could not have described him as "a helpless executant of policies dictated to him by the Chancellor of the Exchequer." Many things might be said of Mr. Dalton, but not that—Hugh as Kingsley's plaything. No!

As a retailer I am glad that the President implemented the minority report of the Retail Trades Committee and discarded the funeral benefit, preferring to give us an opportunity of life by a policy of fair shares to sellers as well as buyers.
F. E. BOARD

22 High Street,
Sheffield.

SOCIALISM, THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE FUTURE

Sir,—In a recent issue A.M. gave the Labour Party and the Trade Union Movement a curtain lecture on their failure to educate the workers for Socialism. He, himself, however, seems to betray a surprising lack of knowledge of the Labour Movement he is criticising. For example, he makes the extraordinary suggestion that the W.E.A. is a Socialist educational body. Actually it is nothing of the kind. If A.M. has any doubts about the matter all he need do is to make inquiries at the Board of Education.

It was precisely because the W.E.A. was far from being a Socialist organisation (to do it justice it has never pretended to be) that the movement for Independent Working-class Education first came into existence through the formation of the Plebs League and the first Labour College in the period 1908–1909. Despite the combined opposition of the W.E.A., the Universities, the Board of Education and bodies like the Carnegie Trustees, the Independents were soon providing on an increasing scale the kind of education that would seemingly appeal to A.M.

To-day the I.W.C.E. movement, as we call it, is represented by the National Council of Labour Colleges. Its existence is proof of the fact, which must come as a surprise to A.M. in view of his slighting remarks about the trade unions, that the trade unions are doing most of the educational work as distinct from propaganda of the British Labour Movement. Unions like the N.U.R., for example, pay the N.C.L.C. an affiliation fee of 3*d.* per member in order to provide an educational scheme which enables the members to attend N.C.L.C. classes free, to have free postal courses on two dozen different subjects ranging from Public Speaking to Economics and Socialism, to attend N.C.L.C. day and week-end schools free and to have occasional lectures at branches.

The N.C.L.C. has up to 12,000 postal course students annually. Each year it deals with about 60,000 students of all kinds.

Perhaps the most remarkable fact about the N.C.L.C.'s work is that most of it is done by manual workers and white collar workers who get no payment.

The N.C.L.C. has had extremely little assistance from what are usually called the intellectuals. The number of university professors and lecturers, for example, who have given assistance to the N.C.L.C. has been microscopic and that applies to university graduates as a whole.

I could name not a few of what A.M. politely calls "senile trade union candidates" who have done much more for Socialist educational work than the average intellectual who is so free with his criticism of them.

If any of your readers desire to help with our work I shall be glad to hear from them.

J. P. M. Millar,
General Secretary,
National Council of Labour Colleges
Tillicoultry, Scotland.

PLANS FOR LONDON

Sir,—Your footnote to Mr. Lowles's letter says: "It is largely because they have had experience only of ill-constructed flats that so many people prefer houses." Do you really give your editorial authority to this view? In a way it is as unanswerable, and as true, as to say that it is because people have only tasted an unpalatable species of dandelion that they prefer potatoes. However flats are constructed, there are basic needs of family life they can never meet. Practical housing experts are at one with popular opinion on this. The fact is that, because they have had experience only of bye-law streets and sub-divided cast-off middle-class houses, the under-privileged can be induced, with difficulty, just to tolerate flats. Independent inquiries have shown that the great majority, even in the best L.C.C. flats, would prefer to be in one-family houses; and these are not "ill-constructed" flats. One can understand that landowners concerned for maximum prices for sites, and councils concerned about rateable value, naturally seek, in the absence of good planning and proper compensation, to gloss over the crucial urban issue of adequate Room to Live; but why should the New Statesman and Nation endorse this gloss?

Surely the right answer to Mr. Lowles is that decentralisation of part of London's congested industry, business, and people, to new towns and to smaller existing towns, would enable the remaining Londoners to have enough space for the houses and gardens they want; and that good technicians are fully capable of so designing open housing schemes as to make them satisfactory for human requirements and architecturally beautiful as well?

F. J. Osborn

Sir,—I have read with interest the numerous articles which have recently appeared in the New Statesman and Nation and other journals on the subject of planning. There is one aspect of the rehousing question that does not seem to have been mentioned; that is the present rating system which appears to produce a vicious spiral of decrease in size of the average working class house.

Many a family who would otherwise rent or purchase a house in which there was room to swing a cat is prevented from doing so by the incidence of rates based on the "assessed rental" which in its turn appears to be based mainly on the size of the house. Most new houses are, partly from this cause, smaller than they would otherwise be, and the average size of the house is lowered so that the rating authority, faced with the problem of preventing an increase in the "rate," is compelled periodically to reassess the values of all houses, generally upwards.

Builders then cut another inch or two from the heights of ceilings and from the sizes of rooms in compensation, and so the circle is completed.

Other objections are, of course, that the limitation of size of house has its effect on the birth rate, and that improvement of property is discouraged, but these are other stories.

It does, however, appear to me that in planning for post-war reconstruction in the interests of health and general welfare an increase in both the size and quality of working class houses is desirable, and that this cannot be done unless we substitute for the present rating system either one based on income or —whisper it not—a socialist economy.

25 Raglan Road, R. P. Frame
Sale, Manchester.

BRITAIN IN PICTURES

Sir,—Your review of October 24th of three recent volumes in the "Britain in Pictures" series was so particularly unflattering to the colour printing in these books that we, the producers responsible for the printing, hope you will allow us a few words in explanation. Any effort to produce a book with a large number of colour plates at the very modest cost of 4*s.* 6*d.* necessarily entails considerable experiment, as new methods used in our colour printing are still in their very early stages. Were it possible to conduct these experiments with the aid of a private or Government subsidy and reject the less successful, in a number of years one might achieve quite satisfactory results; but as this is not possible, the only alternative is to admit deficiency in some cases (as we do) and to try for continual improvement, which we trust your reviewer will find in our next batch of books. We think it only fair to mention, without unduly stressing, the continual difficulties of wartime trained workers so often called up as soon as their very specialised training is complete; inferior paper which stretches under registration, thus producing an effect of blur, etc. Surely it is better to keep trying under adverse conditions than to delay all experiments until perfect conditions arrive, if, indeed, they ever do.

For and on behalf of
Adprint Limited,
6 Newman Street, W. Foges,
London, W.1. Managing Director.

[Our reviewer writes: "I am glad that Mr. Foges admits that the Adprint methods are still in a very early experimental stage. But I fail to see why the results of such gropings should be inflicted upon the public; and above all, I think it lamentable that the British Council should send to foreign countries books that can give only an unjust impression alike of English painting and English colour-printing."—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

LATIN?

Sir,—Knowing that you have sympathy with the ideas of the younger generation, we should like to draw your attention to the unyielding and conservative policy of the Universities.

In spite of the fact that Arts students may neither wish to read Classics at the University, nor need Latin in their syllabus in other schools, they are forced to take a Latin paper in the Responsions, Previous and Entrance examinations to Oxford, Cambridge and other Universities.

Since many progressive schools have replaced Latin by German or other modern languages, a crammed course of Latin is therefore necessary in the Sixth form to qualify students for entrance to the Universities.

We think it is foolish that Latin, a dead language, should take the place, in the last valuable years at school, of other subjects which would be of use both at the University and afterwards.

Olga Beebee, Gillian Cross

WILLIAM MORRIS AND KARL MARX

Sir,—Two short passages from Bruce Glasier's reminiscences of William Morris may throw light on the distinction between Morris and Marx.

As Professor Laski says, Morris was an impenitent revolutionary socialist, but nevertheless he was not a Marxist. At Glasgow, when a suspicious orthodox Marxist asked, "Does Comrade Morris accept Marx's theory of value?" Morris replied: "I am asked if I believe in Marx's theory of value. To speak quite frankly I do not know what Marx's theory of value is, and I'm damned if I want to know." Then he added, "Truth to say, my friends, I have tried to understand Marx's theory, but political economy is not in my line and much of it appears to me to be dreary rubbish." (Bruce Glasier, *William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement*, page 32.) Contrasting Hyndman's orthodox Marxist anti-capitalist oratory with Morris's propaganda, Bruce Glasier says, "Hyndman's lecture, though it excited, did not inspire. One gained no increase of faith in man's humanity to man from it. There was hardly a ray of idealism in it." "When I contrasted Morris's lecture with Hyndman's and compared the two men themselves—their impress on their hearers, their personal qualities—I felt then as I have felt ever since that the two lectures were different kinds of socialism even as the two men were different types of Socialist. And I then felt, and still feel, that I liked the one Socialism and not the other. And I felt and now feel more than ever that the one Socialism is true, universally and for ever, while the other Socialism is at least only half-Socialism and makes only temporary and conditional appeal, and that not to the higher social, but to the more groundling and selfish instincts of the race." (*Op. cit.*, p. 30.)

Presumably this distinction commends itself to Mr. E. L. Woodward and to the reviewer of his autobiography.

H. G. Wood

THE IMPORTANCE OF ITALY

Sir,—Your article "The Importance of Italy" very logically shows the way in which the political warfare should be directed concerning Italy. I think that the same could be applied to Hungary. Certainly important parts of the Hungarian people are expecting their liberation by the United Nations; not merely the Jews and Socialists but also the oppressed peasants and many of the old Liberals. They long for liberation quite as much from their own rulers as from the Prussian Nazism to which the Horthy clique gives full assistance. Nowhere could you find a more suitable terrain for clever propaganda than in Hungary. It is obvious that the Hungarian people have no more grievance against the British than the British have against them. To promote a sweeping propaganda against the Horthy regime (promising a fair deal to the Hungarian people if they revolt against the Nazi-Fascist regime of the old Admiral) could turn the balance of the whole war, because Hungary is still the key to the Balkans.

G. Herczeg

FRIENDLY ITALIANS

Sir,—Mr. Walbank wisely omits the word "kingdom" when quoting my article in which I say that Albania was "already pro-Fascist and dependent." For that attitude he gives the same reasons which many—not I—found for Marshal Pétain's.

Some Albanian friends of mine know how strongly I—and many other Italians—desire to see a free, integral and independent Albania. Those who remember the heroic Albanian republic, remember also the triumphant cheers of the Fascists when it fell. With nearly the same words, later on the Fascists celebrated the fall of the Spanish republic.

Mr. Walbank admires anti-Fascist Albanian guerilla fighters since 1939. I admire them since twelve years earlier.

G. Calzolari

BOOKS IN GENERAL

SEVERAL times in his novels, as wanton Destiny once more foxes his characters in their long retreat from happiness, Thomas Hardy explains, with some touch of apology to the reader, that there were days, even weeks, when his people lived and enjoyed themselves as freely as the rest of us do. The apology points to a basic trait in almost the whole of the English novel—*Tristram Shandy* is the chief exception—and which distinguishes the English novelists from the Russians. The English characters are always on duty to their author's theme, his plot and his beliefs. Tom Jones has a full-time job being Tom Jones, Becky Sharp must always be Beckyish, Dorothea Casaubon will be unremittingly engaged for a lifetime with the inordinate load of argument George Eliot has put upon her. Jane Austen's characters take tea for a purpose and Tony Weller is an almost conscript soak. Such an official and purposeful bustle does not animate the Russian novel, though in form it is often stricter than ours. In the candelabra-like formality of Turgenev, in the modelled narratives of Tolstoy, in those novels of Dostoevski which have the desperate logic of a nightmare police court, we are surprised to see the characters move with an ease, even with a distraction which leaves the feeling that, like ourselves, they have other things to think about besides being the centre of a drama. They have moods, wishes and daydreams which are no help to the plot, but which link them most humanly with ourselves. At the end of their story they subside into life once more. And these "other things," it dawns upon us, are a vital part of the subject. Life goes on between one knock of the postman and the next. Whatever value we give to life, lies between those knocks. And in the Russian novel, it is Russia that lies between.

For all these Ivan Ivanovitches and Natashas are separated by long distances. They are in lonely houses, or in lonely towns or lonely provinces. In Petersburg and Moscow their mind wanders to the estate. Each one becomes, in his isolation, a little Russia in himself. As they yawn or box a servant's ears, there seems to be hope or despair for Russia in the act. Nothing like this feeling exists in our novels—unless we find something approaching it in our literature about the sea—and when we go back to Pushkin we can see another and simple historical reason for the difference. The English novel did not, like the Russian, spring from a national awakening. It did not discover England as, for example, Gogol set out to discover Russia; it did not explore the folklore of the English peasantry. The English novel was not a perturbed and restless aristocrat. It was a gregarious, responsible middle-class committee of judges set upon reforming middle-class manners. And the interesting thing is that the English novel did not begin to affect Russia, in the figure, until Scott inspired Pushkin with his lairds, his peasants, his folklore, his romance and his Scottish national consciousness. Pushkin's own story about the romance of his negro grandfather at the French court was directly inspired by Scott.

These impressions of mine have been started by re-reading Pushkin's short novel, *The Captain's Daughter*, and his long novel-in-verse, *Eugene Onegin*. What remains chiefly in mind after finishing this poem? The ladies are reading Richardson, the author has read Byron in the heady Caucasus; but the pathetic, post-prandial tale of Tanya's bookish love for Onegin, or the drama of Onegin's duel, do not especially hold us. We are not held—in the English version—by the spirited descriptions of emotion, but by the picture of the Russia that is going on in between:

Her husband gave her warm affection;
With her concerns, he would not deal;
He trusted her, without reflection,
And ate and drank in dishabille;
And so his life slid on, quiescent.
Sometimes, at evening, there were present
Some friendly neighbours, not inclined
To stand on forms, and nice and kind.
Some small regrets, a little laughter
Of sorts, a little scandal—well,
So the time goes. Meanwhile they tell
Olga to make the tea; thereafter
Is supper, and then bedtime's come,
And all the visitors go home.

In *The Captain's Daughter*, on the contrary, the drama is the thing. But the same easy, timeless commentary breaks through like a sun of sanity upon that stormy tale. The hero has driven the rebels from his father's house:

> Zurin insisted that the head of Andryuskha the foreman should be exposed for a few hours at the top of a pole by the tavern.
>
> The hussars returned from their pursuit bringing several prisoners with them. They were locked in the same granary where we had endured our memorable siege. We all went to our rooms. The old people needed a rest. As I had not slept the whole night, I flung myself on the bed and dropped fast asleep. Zurin went to make his arrangements. In the evening we all met round the samovar in the drawing room, talking gaily of the past danger. Marya Ivanovna poured out tea. I sat down beside her and devoted myself entirely to her. My parents seemed to look with favour upon the tenderness of our relations. That evening lives in my memory until this day. I was happy, completely happy—and are there many such moments in poor human life?

It takes a Russian novelist to record a moment of human life which has nothing to do with the purpose of his plot and yet to include and melt that moment into the plot.

The Captain's Daughter shows Pushkin's many-sided genius at its greatest pitch of unity. No Byronism here. If we want that we turn to Lermontov, who was a few years younger. Pushkin was just a little old to catch the infection badly. Brilliant enough to pose, "always up to the lips in life, often spluttering, choking, drowning in it—yet with his *eyes* ever above it," to quote Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's excellent words—Pushkin retains a classical sanity. Every sentence in this short novel is a plain statement, every word tells. Many novelists have achieved this and yet, in how many of them, the sentences do not join on to one another. They jerk. There are gaps of understatement, overstatement, swagger or innuendo in between. There are no gaps in Pushkin's sentences. They are laid down end to end, one upon the other, like stone until the house is built. The naturalness of it all, the freshness and—the word I want is something like domesticity (I do not mean homeliness). The great writers of action domesticate action. They show the active life growing naturally out of the inactive and then blending again with it. The inferior writers pitch you by the neck into action and slam the door behind you. I am one of those who believe that the story of violent action should excite the reader but should not frighten him; and Pushkin achieves this just effect by taking us along with him. Of course, behind Pushkin are civilisation, usage, comedy, the self-possession of the aristocratic inheritance. All these are in his story. There is nothing more delightful than his comic portraiture of the lazy little fortress, with its useless gun, its idle soldiers, its charmingly incompetent General and his bossy, caustic wife who brings her sewing to his headquarters and worms his plans out of the other officer's wives. And then that scene changes and the characters change with it. The General is captured and hanged, his wife is killed with him. Pugatchov, the barbarous, wily, brutal and humorous rebel, carrying his fate upon his shoulders with a kind of awed desperation, has the hero in his power. There is one of those small touches here which we might not notice, so smoothly does the narrative run: at his second interview with Pugatchov the next morning by the gallows where the poor old foolish general swings, the narrator sees that the body of the General's wife is still lying on the ground. But not exactly where it fell. It has been covered and moved a yard or two away. In Defoe, you would say that that was just the inventive reporter's eye for the value of an exact detail. You can see him putting it in. In Pushkin, and I think one would say in the whole of Russian realism, our feeling is different. Russian realism gets its effect by its casualness, by its instinct for the accidental. Some inexplicable or, at least, some unexplained moment of life, a small act like a yawn or a cough, is there to suggest that human life is at its unreasonable business. Comic Russia, barbarous Russia, romantic Russia and the firm feudal Russia of the landlord on his estate are all compact in Pushkin's astonishing story. Unlike so many tales about courage and honour, it goes beyond its plot's subject: it is about humanity.

The lyrical feeling of *The Captain's Daughter* is sounder than the fierce feeling of *A Hero of Our Time*. In the same sense Pushkin was worldly wise, which the Byrons never were. Perhaps in Pushkin there is not the same absolute passion for liberty, which is the best that can be said of those infected with the Byronic plague. Onegin, whatever may be said of him, cuts across the Byronic type, because of his sense of honour. He is capable of passion—worse, he is capable of the sentiment of love and can enjoy the accidental contact of finger upon shoulder as he hands his Tanya her boa. Onegin is, at the last resort, unfortunately capable of the simpler human feelings and therefore of being knocked out of his attitudinising by the simple facts of human folly. And lazy as a bear, witty as a monkey, Pushkin sweeps him away—not a doomed soul with a tense face like Lermontov's Pechorin, but like anyone who has ever been hoist with his own petard.

Fare thee well and if for ever
Then for ever fare thee well.

Pushkin quotes Byron's lines. The Byrons really said farewell before the meeting. One sees them straining for the right inhibition. Pushkin's farewells are after the event; more complete therefore, more moving, and rich with experience. He has not staged his life so as to live in a certain way only. He has lived. He writes out of a packed life and with the zest of one who has rich store to draw on.

When we turn finally to the pages of *The Captain's Daughter*, it is to be struck by one similarity between that little war and some parts of the war to-day. That war became mixed, by a sort of gruesome incompetence with the amenities of social life, very much as our own warfare has done. One wonders if this will widen the sympathies of our tougher writers, will smooth out their unconsecutive reactions, and take the need for attitude away. *The Captain's Daughter* reminds writers that statement is not simple until it is serene and not serene until it has been felt.

V. S. PRITCHETT

Eugene Onegin. Trans. by Oliver Elton. Pushkin Press.

The Captain's Daughter. Trans. by Natalie Duddington. Everyman. 3s.

MY INDIA, MY WEST

My India, My West. By KRISHNALAL SHRIDHARANI. *Gollancz.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Krishnalal Shridharani is a poet who has been drawn away from his poetry by the imperious call of politics. On one occasion, evidently in early youth, he approached Mahatma Gandhi with a sonnet: and Gandhi, who can be cruel as well as meek, asked: "Why should you spin poetry when you can well use your time spinning cotton?" The young aspirant went away exceeding sorrowful and crestfallen. I think this was typical of much in civilised India to-day. So long as the political yearning is not appeased and done with, they cannot be their normal selves; and this perhaps is the ultimate lesson of this very fascinating book. When the author writes (on page 305) of the "Hindu one-track mind" as an explanation of the failure to present the Indian case on the human level, he may have been thinking, among other things, of a certain lack of humour, which is the result of a strained earnestness.

His title was well chosen to convey a doubl sentiment. He loves the West, loves it with all its faults, even while he repeats some of th hideous stories of British wickedness in India, which form the stock-in-trade of nationalist propaganda. But his own country naturally claims his first love and his first loyalty. So he idealises her past, and explains her failures by "invasions and the religious bigotry of Mahommedan conquerors."

Listen to this—a true picture of Indian philosophical and mathematical genius, followed by an entirely fanciful one of Indian triumphs in applied science:

> Who, to take a supreme example, could invent zero as a starting point for what is now mistakenly known as the Arabic system of notation? Only the peculiar Hindu make-up and genius could, I think, conceive at least the first time, that the very point, of differentiation between plus and minus, between positive and negative, was real. *Shunya* (O), or void, is as real as one—two—three *now* to the whole civilised world, but it first dawned on the Hindu mind.

And then follows a claim for Indian astronomy, chemistry and medicine, *up to the end of the sixteenth century*, to have marched abreast of the world and sometimes outdistanced it. "It was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that the Hindu mind lost its scientific force . . . and began to seek solace in the other world." But it returned to its sciences in the nineteenth century. This is not quite on a par with the claim of the founder of the Arya Samaj that the Vedic sages invented the mariner's compass, gunpowder, and steam locomotion; but it is hardly more firmly grounded in the facts of history.

And yet Mr. Shridharani can be eminently objective and enlightening in his judgments of man and things. "What India needs most at the present time are the sciences and technological skill" (p. 57). "American training can make a democrat out of a Hindu hierarchist." "The practice of supporting oneself even while going to college teaches a Hindu the dignity of labour" (p. 58), "Absence of the chair from the Indian scene, and its ubiquitous presence on the American, have had a lot to do with the fact that Indians are philosophers while occidentals are doers. . . . Cross-leggedness makes a whole people lazy to a point where they do not mind even being exploited by chair-sitting foreigners so long as their leisure is left intact" (p. 110). "The worship of motherhood in preference to womanhood . . . was capable of fostering the conception that woman was merely a means to an end . . . has dismally marked Indian life ever since" (p. 131), "When the Nationalists came to power in 1937 through non-violence, they quite often had to punish people who themselves used Satyagrahic tactics against the Congress régime" (p. 188).

Mr. Shridharani gives a striking explanation of the change which has taken place in the Indian woman during the past twenty-five years. What he calls the introduction of romance into India, by which he evidently means the new tendency among Indian men to see, and to see with respect and sympathy, the woman *for herself*, as well as for her potential motherhood, has brought the two sexes into co-operation over the feminist movement. In revivalist or religious movements women respond more readily than men; and the Nationalist struggle was precisely what Indian women needed to make their dramatic entrance into public life, first by assisting their men, and later on by taking over the positions vacated by men removed to jails. But the complete clue lies in the Gandhian technique of non-violent resistance. In all social institutions underlined by violence women cannot be the heroes. The Gandhi woman who dons the saffron sari, as a symbol of her mission in the non-violent struggle, has come into her own, because she carries weapons against which the civilised (or semi-civilised) armoury is empty.

Now it was always true that the Indian woman used non-violent means of resistance. Alone, or with her children, she lay down in front of the horsemen to compel attention to her supplications; just as the Brahmans held solemn fasts by way of threat to bring upon the oppressor the curse of Brahman-murder, or the creditor sat at the debtor's door to call down supernatural penalties upon him. The true difference of the Gandhian technique is that it is organised and systematic, and directed to an end of high public import, so that the participants share in a wider and more inspiring collaboration. Let it not be forgotten also that *Satyagraha*, for its success, postulates a certain *ruthfulness* in the opponent. In an earlier book on this subject Mr. Shridharani wrote that it "emphasises the fundamental unity of the disputants." There must be something like a common conscience, a common sense of underlying right, a common agreement, tacit but not less real, that certain things are not done.

It is in the reality of this postulate that the hope of future wholesome, and even friendly, relations between Indians and British lies. *Extinctus amabitur idem*. They will like us better, when we are gone. It is the question of power, and only the question of power, that lies between us.

Such a book as this has so much in it that it is not easy for a reviewer to know where to stop. It begins with an account of the author's childhood, his schooling, and his resistance to the pressure of the family to marry him as a schoolboy (similar but less violent than the resistance offered by the founder of the Arya Samaj), and goes on to describe early exploits over Gandhi's famous march to the sea in 1930. Then (after three months of imprisonment) we have eight years in America and a pungent but sympathetic account of some American weaknesses and of much that is attractive in American life. Here we get a penetrating analysis of the consequences of the "interiorisation" of American life, as opposed to the "exteriorisation" of that of Hindus. Indians live out of doors and Americans live in; wherefore, among other things, the spaciousness of the outside inspires lofty and at times sublime yet nebulous mental images, while the limitations of the interior clip the wings and make imagery precise and distinct. The comparison is carried into the musical arts of the two countries respectively, but the reader must look at pages 99 to 106 of the book to find all this; and I think it will repay him, like much else in the book.

Then we go back to India, its social life and its politics, and the author gives us a valuable sketch of the leaders—some three dozen of them—and finally his estimate of the Cripps's proposals, and of what follows them. His remedy, not very clearly envisaged, perhaps, is some sort of regional internationalisation of Asia, after a meeting of British and Indians "in the presence of Chinese and American advisers, and under the watchful guidance of the President of the U.S.A."

Mr. Shridharani has great literary gifts, and plenty of shrewd insight when he lets himself go, and forgets for the moment his duty to the cause. He is weak on dates. His work would be greatly improved by an index, and it is so valuable to the student of Indian politics that it deserves that addition; the more necessary because the chapter headings do not give a clear notion of the contents. There are indications that he is not so much interested in Muslims as in Hindus, and that his experience of India is purely urban.

I cannot resist making one more quotation which shows what a pictorial mind the writer possesses. It is the sort of thing that Trotsky might have written. He is full of the thought of the sorrows of India, and his eye has lighted on a full-page map of India beneath which lies Ceylon, like a great drop shed from the continent to the north. He calls India "the peninsula which *weeps Ceylon into the Indian Ocean.*" There is a touch of the seventeenth century and its metaphysical poets in this imagery.

JOHN MAYNARD

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JONATHAN CAPE

MR. O'CASEY'S NEW PLAY

Red Roses for Me. By SEAN O'CASEY. *Macmillan.* 6*s*.

A new play by Sean O'Casey! The odd thing is that one should be reading it instead of seeing it acted in a theatre. Oh, yes, there's a war on; Irish actors in London are scarce; he has had failures and quarrels that bar the way to performance. The arts, we are always being told, must expect to suffer in wartime. But an austerity that keeps the theatre open while excluding the work of its greatest living practitioner may seem to some of us insanely perverse. By all means (since this is a free country) let's have *No Orchids for Miss Blandish*; give us, then, also *Red Roses for Me.* So far as winning the war goes there's probably nothing to choose between orchids and roses; but Mr. O'Casey's drama has the further claim that, war or no war, it's on the side of humanity.

I don't know for certain quite how good Mr. O'Casey's play is. Good unquestionably; perhaps very good. *Red Roses for Me* retrieves the failure of *Within the Gates*; the attempt to make drama out of the crowd, to strike the divine spark in men and women prowling the streets. An argument, a casual encounter, a nameless "tragedy," a flag or a band, stir them and him. The hideous pathos of town lives, which excited Baudelaire to the point of martyrdom, rouses in Mr. O'Casey a wild eloquence and hope. The slum corner accuses society and holds also the seeds of future societies. Mr. O'Casey's attitude towards it has changed. The tragi-comedy, the "state of chassis" no longer fill the stage; he sees visions too. He has acquired faith. What exactly that faith is—a compound of humanism, religion and politics—it would be hard to say, but his characters, Protestant, Catholic, policeman or Fenian, grope towards it, live and die by its light. Whether this pity for humanity is, in the narrow artistic sense, a gain for Mr. O'Casey might be disputed. None of his writings in recent years has equalled the magic of *Juno and the Paycock*; but that is the bad luck of producing a masterpiece at the first shot and having to grow up to produce another. Mr. O'Casey has grown and still grows; *Red Roses for Me* is the proof.. Here for the first time he has succeeded in writing a play on the poetic level in which eloquence and everyday speech, characters and visions and symbols meet. Those awkward abstract wastes, lit up by expressionist flares, which failed to move the spectator of *The Silver Tassie* and *Within the Gates*, have become part and parcel of a new technique. The characters of *Red Roses for Me* have their expanding moments of self-effacement and some of them patiently play chorus, but still this is a drama not of mouthpieces but of human beings, only one degree less vivid than the Paycock and his cronies. The modern Dublin tenanted by Pistol, Bardolph and Nym has advanced in Shakespearean richness. Look at the texture of eloquence that Mr. O'Casey now commands The lovers, Ayamon and Sheila, are interrupted by an old man who carries a melodion and goes round inquiring after the safety of the Bank of Ireland. In reply to Ayamon's "Now what th' hell do you want?" he gives them a sweeping bow and says:

> Ah, me two sweet, snowy-breasted Dublin doves! Me woe it is to come ramblin' in through marjoram moments scentin' the serious hilarity of a genuine courtin' couple. I'm askin' now what's the dear one's name, if that isn't threspassin' on others who are in a firmer condition of friendship? Though, be rights, it's a fair and showy nosegay I should be throwin' through a shyly opened window into the adorable lady's lap.

Too measured an eloquence, too grand a way of talking between Tom, Dick and Harry? At moments, reading this play, one is dazzled, caught in the web; at others grandiloquence is mocked as it floats away; at other moments again, the reader pauses uncertainly, wondering whether the aggrandisement of word and action has made human nature larger or let it slip from the grasp. That is the point that can only be decided by stage performance; for Mr. O'Casey possesses a magic of the stage—sometimes has had it, sometimes hasn't—that unites verbiage and mockery and afflatus into a new glory of the English theatre. He seems to have it in *Red Roses for Me*; there is the usual brilliant comedy of dilapidation and brag; it strikes one as the most passionate of his plays, the least concerned with incident and diversion; the Third Act brings off the vision of a street scene of loafers and flower-sellers who are transfigured into something greater than themselves; technically, at any rate, Mr. O'Casey has found his new poetic medium. Seems; and I think probably the drama, the knot of straggling lives, would be drawn closer by performance, though it is hard to be sure. From the page one is left exalted, wondering, upset by so much passion and haranguing, and by a death that raises a banner the device of which is half-turned away from us. Some theatre manager, between getting a load of this and full-swinging that, must take pity on us and bring Mr. O'Casey's play to the theatre where it belongs. Meanwhile, we can read and re-read the book, and hope for the best.

G. W. STONIER

MR. BROWN DISCOVERS AMERICA

I Meet America. By W. J. BROWN, M.P. *Routledge.* 10*s*. 6*d*.

WHEN Mr. W. J. Brown left for America he was secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association, with no thought of getting back to the House as member for Rugby. He went with the prospect of speaking on the British Civil Service and on Labour in wartime, being himself a union official decidedly at odds with the T.U.C. and the Labour Party. He had a full "skedyule" of engagements and, with the backing of the British authorities, was enabled to make most of his journeys by air. I should judge him to be the only one among English speakers sent to America last year (a few only in all, as against the cohort imagined by the Hearst Press) to appear as an advocate of full U.S. intervention. This is according to his own statement in Parliament four months ago.

Mr. Brown set out with all the tremors natural to an Englishman who had been told that the United States is the most exhausting country, that the land which has taken the fatigue out of travel subjects the itinerant visitor to an ordeal such as a normally tough Briton should not be asked to endure. Quite naturally he felt badly about being out of England in 1941, and the pangs of homesickness came upon him long before he encountered the maddening obstacles which impeded his return. This book is the diary of his five months' absence.

Mr. Brown's audiences were of the usual wide variety, while the many Labour meetings and gatherings of Government employees gave him opportunities of expounding our Civil Service and, by comparison with North America, our full acceptance of unionism in the public departments. He appears to have gone through this experience without reaching an adequate estimate of the complexity of American Labour politics and mechanism. He realised, of course, the main lines of the conflict between A.F. of L. and C.I.O., but he could not be expected to grasp the position and tactics of John L. Lewis or the personal and factional elements in his quarrel with the President. Mr. Brown was shocked by the scope and character of racketeering in the Labour world, and he accuses the President of

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moral cowardice in his handling of the great unions. No one, we may be sure, can tell Mr. Roosevelt anything about this crucial business that he does not know, and even the best-instructed European visitor can hardly give advice to Washington on labour legislation. Mr. Brown, by the way, has not made cuts in his diary, even when events showed some of his entries to be wide of the mark. He observed a rising tide of resentment against organised Labour, on account largely of inter-union disputes (bitter and often fantastic) and the hampering of war production. To-day, however, Labour's co-operation in the war effort is beyond challenge. The graver difficulties come from other quarters.

Mr. Brown cannot forget his grievances against the British Government for its parsimony in the matter of allowances. It was apparently his anger over this matter which led him to say with emphasis that the English are incapable of propaganda. Hitler has had his word upon that. There is, of course, plenty to be said in criticism of British official expenditure abroad, but the important aspect of this question is not personal. A living allowance of $10 a day for an approved speaker is not princely, but in wartime it should not be deemed a hardship. If a novice, knowing the rate, spends $3.50 on his dinner, he is not proving his case against the Treasury but making confession of his own innocence. Our diarist quite rightly was excited by the spectacle of America—by the wonders of night flying, the power and activity and profusion of the cities, and by much else. He discovered that the United States is a country of immeasurable extremes—that is, it resembles his own land and most others. He was unlucky in his experience of hotels, and he says, oddly for an Englishman, that it is barbarous to expect a man to deliver a speech just after a meal, when nothing could be simpler than for the victim to eat sparingly.

Mr. Brown as recorder is surprisingly careless. He says that all Americans read their speeches. True, the radio has brought back the manuscript (and is multiplying the ghost-writer), but an English speaker accustomed to using notes learns to discard them, because of the still general American practice of speaking without paper. The diarist's indifference to such important details as labels and proper names is excessive. His practice, one would guess, is to put down a name without thinking of initials or spelling. The publisher's reader, at any rate, should know the author of *Anthony Adverse*, and there are dozens of others. Every English reader is irritated by American mistakes of this kind. That alone is a good reason for taking care, and Mr. Brown could easily have had his proofs read by a knowledgeable person. In New York he must have seen that there is no amber traffic light. He found there a "vast, proliferating, cigar-smoking life," while others have noted that nowadays you can walk for hours in the streets without seeing a man smoking a cigar. Mr. Brown found the Americans a childlike people. He should be a judge, for here is as ingenuous a book about our friends and allies as we have had this year.

S. K. Ratcliffe

MILTON'S CHRISTIANITY

A Preface to Paradise Lost. By C. S. Lewis. *Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.*

Mr. Lewis professes to be a Christian. He writes (p. 64) "Some (by no means all) of the things which the atheist reader must try to feel as if he believed, I, actually, in cold prose, do believe. But for the student of Milton my Christianity is an advantage." I am not so sure. Perhaps we know more about Mr. Lewis than he imagines, since in a moment of imprudence and impudence he gave us *The Screwtape Letters* for our great enjoyment. He knows much about devils, and something about angels—but what about Milton, who was more complicated than either devil or angel?

This book is a delight for all who must for ever love Milton—and you must be very sure of your status as a cultured man before you can permit yourself to confess that you do not love Milton—but the delight is partly in the contentious pleasure of disputation. Certainly Milton was a "Christian"—but he was not the same kind of "Christian" as Mr. C. S. Lewis: the *Screwtape* devils have nothing at all in common with Milton's devils.

Mr. Lewis tries to make of *Paradise Lost* a much more "orthodox" expression of belief than it is. Perhaps others have "rationalised" Milton over much. I do not think that either Mr. Lewis or his opponents quite realise the extraordinary effervescence in English cogitation that took place between 1640 and 1660. I believe that during those twenty years more ideas were expressed and debated in England than at any other period in the history of England. Mr. Lewis argues that we must confine ourselves to what is actually stated in the poem *Paradise Lost*, and yet he cries "What would you not give to have a real live Epicurean at your elbow while reading Lucretius?" Well, we have at our elbow *The Treatise of Christian Doctrine*, a book in which Milton set out at full length his secret thought, and should we not use it? To take one point: Milton does not believe in the existence of the soul as an entity separate from the body. Sometimes "soul" with him—as in the Bible—means spirit or intellect; sometimes it means "life"—also as in the Bible. In both cases it is an activity attached to a body. "The whole man dies," maintains Milton in the *Treatise*. And in *Paradise Lost*, in the account of the creation, we read this magnificent line:

> Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul.

Now a first reading of *Paradise Lost* while we are ignorant of this Miltonic heresy leaves us unperturbed. Nowhere in the poem does Milton obtrude this belief. Why? Because he is writing an epic, which he intends to appeal to the world at large, Catholic, Protestant, misbeliever alike. He tries to tell his tale so that none shall be aroused to active opposition, and that the reader may concentrate on the purely epic, literary values. But if we read *Paradise Lost* over again at leisure, armed with the knowledge that Milton was a mortalist (and there were many in his day) we notice in this "Christian poem" a curious lack of any reference to the *immortal soul* of the Christian orthodox belief. Is this a matter of little importance? Were we to notice that a painter never uses the colour "blue," would that be of little importance in our appraisement of his aesthetics?

On Satan's character Mr. Lewis is most illuminating. I do not know that he does not go far to prove that the character of Satan is an impossibility, both for psychology and for theology. Satan is supposed to have a powerful intellect. He must know, then, that he cannot conquer or thwart God. Then where is he? The conception of Satan embodies a fundamental contradiction. Milton's Satan is not Satan: he is a very powerful but very ignorant man. Here again the *Treatise of Christian Doctrine* is enlightening: Satan practically does not appear in it; nor is the fall of the angels described or situated at all precisely; surely an extraordinary omission for the author of *Paradise Lost*. Was Satan merely a literary figure? Boileau had said, and here he was right:

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doctrine—followed by the whole company of the French seventeenth-century writers, who were great literary artists.

On angels Mr. Lewis is very helpful. Angels have bodies, made of a "thinner" substance than ours, but bodies, with physical properties. I wonder, does Mr. Lewis realise that for Milton angels have no souls? They have only "subtle bodies." In fact, God himself is a physical substance, and it is no good relling us, as Mr. Lewis does, that the sentence "God is light" is a perfectly innocent one in Milton because many perfectly orthodox Christians have used it before and since. Milton meant it literally, and belongs here to an un-Christian line of thinkers that go from antiquity to Hugo when he writes:

Rien n'existe que Lui, le flamboiement profond
Et les âmes, les grains de lumière, les mythes.

In short, one cannot understand *Paradise Lost* by just reading *Paradise Lost*, and then cogitating deeply. Milton is one link—a very splendid link—in a very long chain.

Many more points could be discussed; it is a great feat that Mr. Lewis causes them to arise, and often suggests a solution. Many more books will be written about Milton, and Mr. Lewis's book is also a brilliant link in a long chain which is a credit to English thought.

DENIS SAURAT

A FOND OLD MAN

Petain-Laval: The Conspiracy. *Constable. 2s. 6d.*

Pétain's character will present a fascinating subject for the future historians of France. Some English writers still try to make a case for him, and the controversy will continue until we obtain more evidence. We have not yet received, for instance, any official account of his communication with the British Government during the last days before the Armistice. But such evidence as we have tells strongly against him, and this short book offers new facts and a convincing thesis. Lord Cecil in an introduction testifies to the probity of the author, who for good reasons remains anonymous. Most of the material has already appeared in the daily paper *France*: it is now issued in an excellent translation by Mr. Michael Sadleir.

Pétain was known in the last war as a defeatist. (One may add that he was savagely jealous of Foch; and the *éloge* he delivered on succeeding to his chair in the Academy was in fact a cunning denigration.) He used his position in the War Office to oppose innovations in military technique, and became increasingly ambitious of political power. In 1939, after the Fascist riots of February 6th, a pamphlet came out called "We Want Pétain." Among the *Action Française* royalists, among the *Croix de Fer* men, and among the *cagoulards*, many looked to Pétain as the most appropriate figurehead. During the Spanish War he became a champion of Franco, and in March, 1939, he was made ambassador to Spain. The war broke out, and Pétain continued on friendly terms with the German Ambassador, who informed him that the Germans would attack in the middle of May. Pétain had already decided that France would be defeated, and was actively preparing to become the profiteer of this defeat. He preferred Hitler to the French democrats; and he had already sounded Darlan. When called from Madrid to join the French Government, he told his friends he was going to France to make peace. "France needs defeat. Defeat is necessary for her regeneration. Victory would strengthen the political regime which has brought her to moral ruin." It is fair to add that he cherished senile dreams about German chivalry. He was not so much consciously dishonourable as ignorant and stupid. He established his dictatorship, and started to arrange France on the pre-Revolutionary lines advocated by Maurras.

So far Laval had helped him, hoping to use the old general as Hitler had used Hindenburg. But Laval, whose schemes were different from those of Maurras, now tried to make the old man his prisoner. Pétain arrested and deposed him. The result was an immense increase in his own popularity. The reconciliation, which took place last spring, is still unexplained. The Germans were responsible, but we do not know what threats they used. Pétain's past evidently lends itself to limitless blackmail. To-day Pétain, Laval, Déat and Doriot form a nest of vipers seething with mutual hatred. Pétain is the only one of them to whom any decent Frenchmen adhere; and the number of his supporters decreases steadily. Unluckily some of the French in Africa are still a prey to delusions that have been dissipated in metropolitan France. But we may hope that our African campaigns will bring general confidence in an Allied victory. Hitherto we have had to base our propaganda on hopes. Now it can be based upon facts. And Pétain, who symbolises the acceptance of defeat, seems to be doomed, and with him the whole gimcrack system he has tried to establish.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

LIVING-ROOM

The Post-war Home. Lectures on its Interior and Equipment. *The Studio, for the Royal Society of Arts. 2s. 6d.*

The lecturers in this series include Miss Elizabeth Denby on *Using Space to Advantage*, F. R. Yerbury on *Adaptation of Design to Standardisation and Mass Production*, Mrs. Darcy Braddell on *Common Sense in Furniture Design*, Holbrook Jackson on *Household Fabrics*; but these merely happen to be subjects which interest me specially in a longish list. Many of the lectures were good, and the discussions are printed. The emergent conclusions are that there is nothing to prevent all our people being well, comfortably, beautifully, housed, for the technical mastery of materials is complete; with plastics ahead to add to the old ones. Nothing, except bad old traditions, lack of good new ones, and the internecine feuds of the people engaged in building and furnishing houses. Cost, for example, is a bad old tradition; if working-class housing were really accepted as a community service, we should not have to build cottages so meanly proportioned that there is no room to move in them. Miss Denby showed some hair-raising lay-outs. If you are building a house for working people it is an increased reason, not a diminished one, for double-walling interior walls—as the Swiss do—so that each bedroom has proper built-in wardrobe-space. The rich, with large rooms, can clutter them with compactums if they like. The lecturers were partially inhibited by commerce. For example, the lectures on glass, pottery, plastics, household materials never mentioned the firms which do, now, produce well-designed things—with the sole exception of Wedgwood for pottery. Fancy talking about modern materials without any word of the Edinburgh Weavers! Mr. Holbrook Jackson, greatly daring, did say that Heal's and Peter Jones stocked their shops on a basis of taste, instead of following the usual commercial practice of simply taking what the manufacturer offers; and some interesting discussions on this point were joined in by representatives of big shops; all were agreed that good designs were as cheap to produce as bad. The mass production controversy kept cropping up; some want to pre-fabricate everything, even roofs. But before standardisation must come design, and it is good, simple, beautiful designing which is needed now.

FREDA WHITE.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 667

et by **Roger Marvell**

Competitors are asked to summarise the distinction etween : (1) Charming, fascinating, and alluring.) Proud, vain, and conceited. (3) Clever, intelli- nt, and intellectual. All nine epithets to be efined. Competitors may add illustrations but are minded that brevity is the soul of wit.

ULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and hould be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great urnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor first post on Monday, November 23rd.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves e right to print in part or as a whole any matter nt in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. nnot be returned. When no entries reach the quired standard no prize will be awarded.

REPORT ON COMPETITION No. 664

et by **Arthur Marshall**

Amateur theatricals can be relied upon to produce two things : innumerable mistakes on the part of the players and an ecstatic notice in the local press.

Competitors are invited to write such a notice after an amateur production of one of the following : The Admirable Crichton, The Silver Box, The Circle, The Merchant of Venice, Pygmalion, The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, Ghosts, Cyrano de Bergerac and The Vortex. Reading between the lines, it should be quite clear that the performance was a complete fiasco.

eport by Arthur Marshall

It was cheering to find that so many competitors idently share my morbid pleasure in the delicious ncertainties of the amateur stage. All is fascination : e musicians feverishly scraping out gems from *he Gondoliers*, the over-excited faces peep-boing rough the curtains, the beetroot make-ups, the bundant whiskers, the doors and the bells and the ghts that are so clearly not all right on the night, e hive-like *va-et-vient* behind the scenes, the Act III eeches mistakenly boomed out in Act II and grimly delivered in Act III, the snow scene with a minor roadway welcome fluttering fitfully down. And the al eager bowing row, with all the largest bouquets r should one think of them as wreaths ?) going to vacious Miss Prendergast who scuttled on with the lver (but no telegram) in Act I. It is, I dare say, ther cheap fun ; but it is fast and furious for all at.

Entries were numerous, and several were of great length. This was quite in keeping as such notices, which have to allot an "exquisite thumb-nail" or "inspired vignette" to each character, are endless. There was a tendency, however, for competitors to allow the horrors of the performance they were describing to run away with them and to disregard the "between the lines" stipulation.

Paul Dehn's tone of genial all-round praise, choice of phrase ("zestfully sustained" is brilliant), anti-climax, and really disastrous performance of what I am sure was referred to as "The Merchant," win him the first prize. I give below some of the best extracts from other competitors. In addition to those mentioned, William Armstrong, J. H. Donaldson, F. C. C., Roger Machell, K. Bloomfield, E. Attock, R. Upcott. Leslie Johnson, A. Buckeridge, J. Taylor and R. S. Goodhall distinguished themselves. I recommend that the second prize be divided between Stanley J. Sharpless and T. Naisby.

PYGMALION :

The general verdict after the show was "One long scream from start to finish." . . . The high spot of the evening was Miss Daisy Burke-Neverthwaite's performance as Eliza Doolittle . . . She was comic and pathetic in turn, and her acting was finished from the word "Go." Her rendering of the famous Shavian adjective was such that it was highly droll without bringing a blush to the cheek.

(Stanley J. Sharpless)

After his rendering of the silly ass in "The Ghost Train" last year, Robert Wedge was considered to be an obvious choice for the part of Professor Higgins. . . . We remember his deft portrayals of Coriolanus and Abraham Lincoln in previous productions . . . Eliza swept the whole play before her imperiously. Her timing, with hurried passages and occasional periods of complete silence showed an altogether unusual grasp of stagecraft. (T. Naisby)

From first to last Miss Sarah Boozey's Eliza, with her humorously strident, Cockney tones, dominated the scene . . . The audience was obviously disappointed when Miss Boozey (quite rightly) substituted a significant pause for the naughty word at the end of Act III. (Towanbucket)

GHOSTS :

The ingenious effects which created last year's ghost train were again made full use of for the Orphanage fire, which crackled and roared and glared most realistically. (Stanley French)

THE VORTEX :

Her production suggested effectively and daringly the modern Bohemian atmosphere. All the performers appeared in dashing dressing gowns and used long cigarette holders *à la* Edgar Wallace ; when the conversation lagged they picked up copies of *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. . . . Miss Trott, who is always first-class in such homely roles, was at her best as Mrs. Lancaster, the woman whose kindly interest in other young men leads her own son to feel neglected.

(Maurice Cranston)

FIRST PRIZE

St. Cypriot's Boys in Shakespeare Drama

A Notable Production

A notable production of Shakespeare's effective "Merchant of Venice" by the boys of St. Cypriot's Preparatory School, West Worthing, was applauded to the echo on Friday, October 30th, by a goodly audience of parents, most of whose children were included in the cast.

Owing to the absence of J. Gossage (Mod. Shell B.) with whooping cough the part of Portia was undertaken at very short notice by Mr. "Toby" Benfield (perhaps better known as St. Cypriot's "rugger" coach), who is to be congratulated on playing the part at such very short notice. His convincing interpretation of Portia as a somewhat masculine hoyden was well contrasted with the winsome graciousness of Nerissa (R. Hapgood).

From the moment when the curtain first rose on an empty stage—representing, as our programme informed us, a street in Bulmont—to the play's tragic climax where Shylock (L. Kolp) kills Antonio (H. Pirbright) with his bare fist, an atmosphere of tension was zestfully sustained, the choice of the leaden casket by the Prince of Morocco (P. Kookia) bringing the short Second Act to a dramatic close.

Stern Conflict

The forceful trial scene was conducted in complete darkness—a well-conceived device, doubtless symbolising the stern conflict as a clash of ideas rather than of characters. At its close the pleasing "Mercy" speech was fluently delivered in front of the curtain by Mr. Benfield clad in simple legal robes with a book in his hand.

During the interval the School Orchestra under the able conductorship of Mr. Coughtry rendered Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance." The contrast between the smooth, easily flowing "Pomp" theme and the more complex passages representing "Circumstance" was well maintained.

In a speech from the stage the Headmaster announced that, next Easter Term, roll-call would take place on Lower Fourpenny instead of in the traditional Moser Buildings.

(Paul Dehn)

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The seventh annual general meeting of llied Bakeries Limited was held on Nov. h in London.

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The Government subsidy of bread had been scontinued, and the rebate on flour used bread making considerably modified; ere had been an increase of 5s. per sack the price of flour used for biscuits, cake d confectionery, and it was estimated that oss earnings would be reduced by approxi- ately £200,000 per annum. Nevertheless, rrent net profit should not be less than at for the year to June 30th last, which as £46,000 more than the previous year.

The company's contribution to the ational Exchequer was substantially higher an in the previous year, but, owing to arging out to subsidiaries Excess Profits x paid on their behalf, dividends from bsidiary companies could not reflect total rnings, and profit was shown after all xation. They were advised that publica- on of a Combined Earnings Statement was advisable during the war.

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